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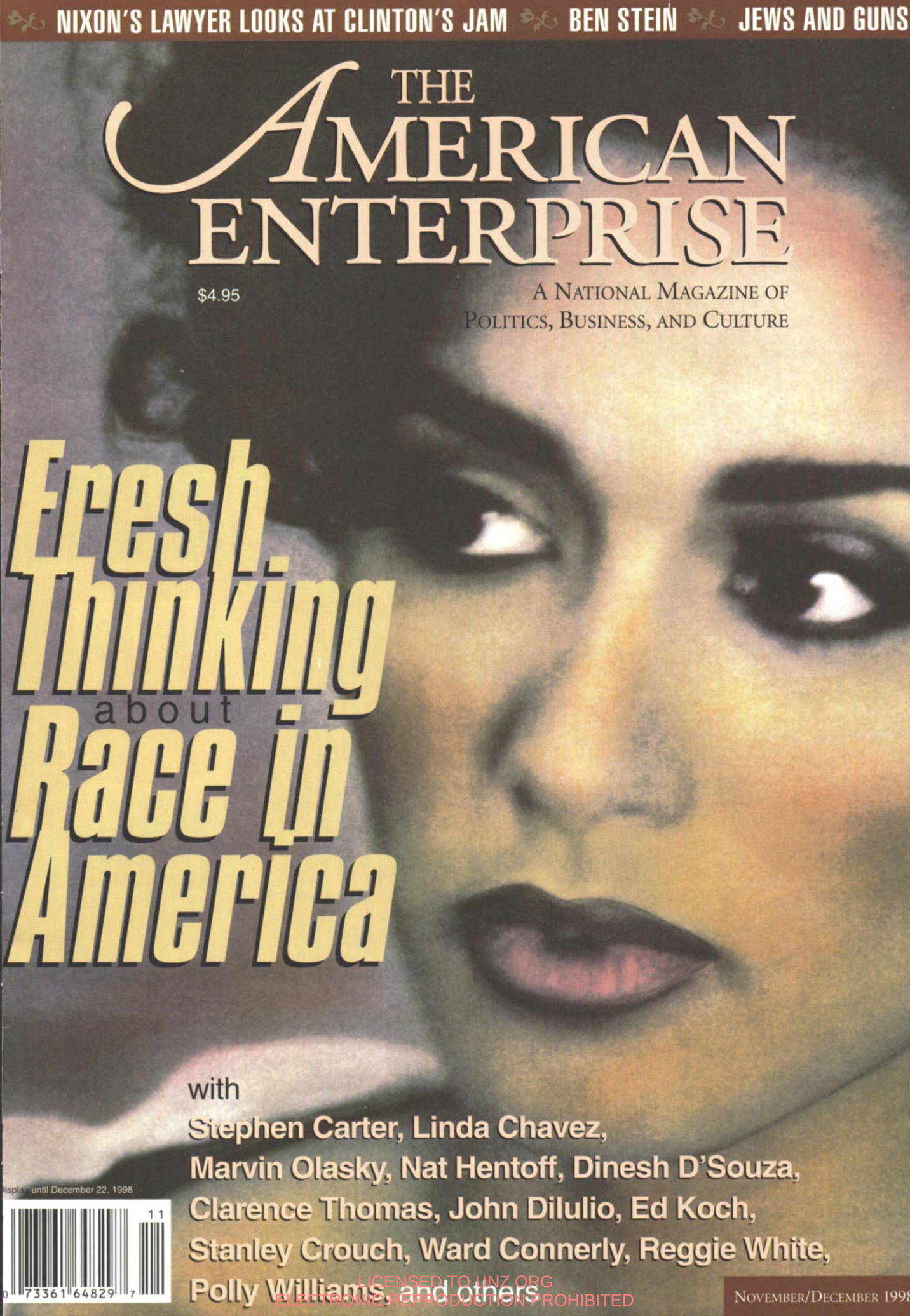

Fresh Thinking about Race in America

with
Stephen Carter, Linda Chavez,
Marvin Olasky, Nat Hentoff, Dinesh D'Souza,
Clarence Thomas, John Dilulio, Ed Koch,
Stanley Crouch, Ward Connerly, Reggie White,
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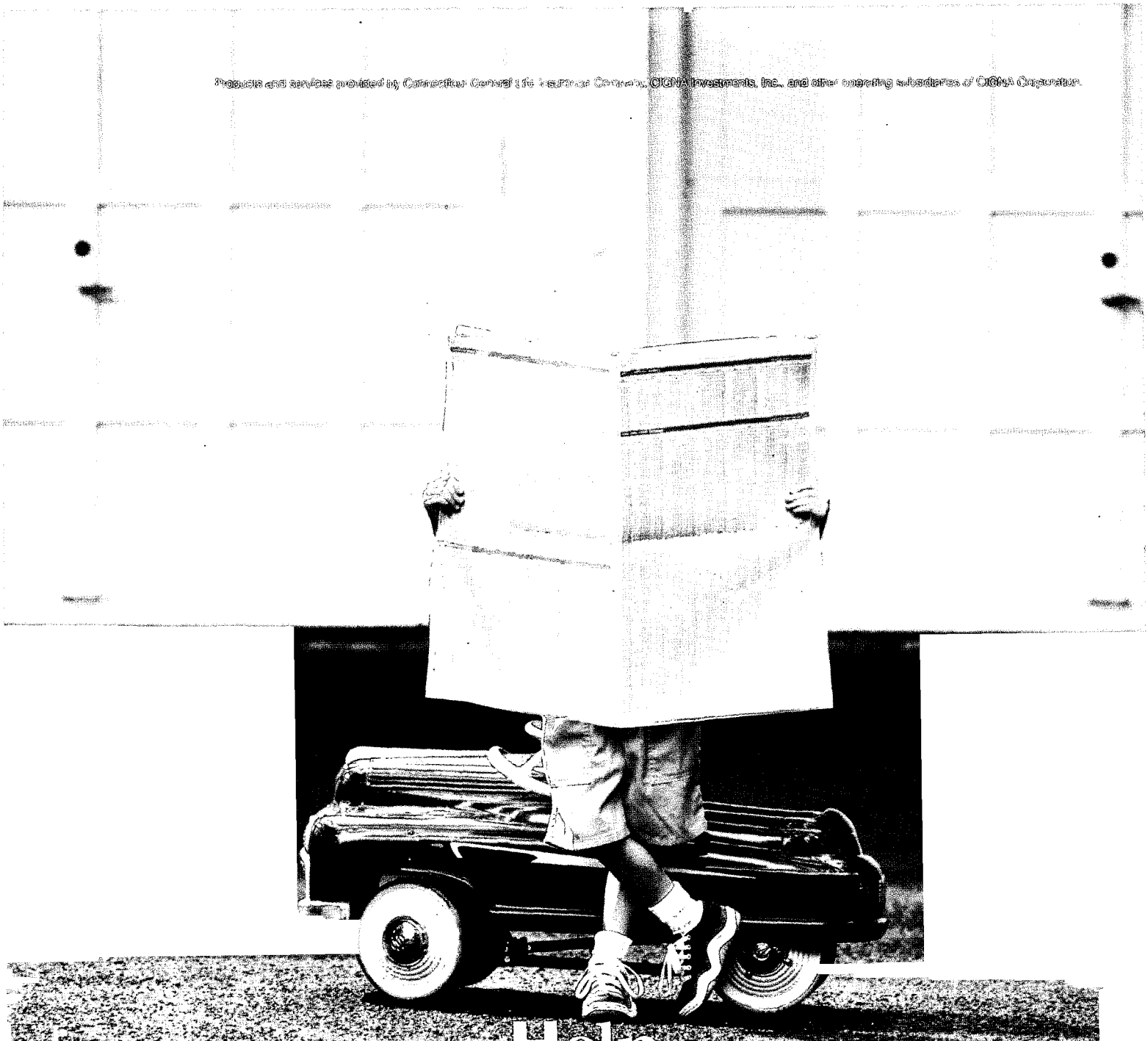

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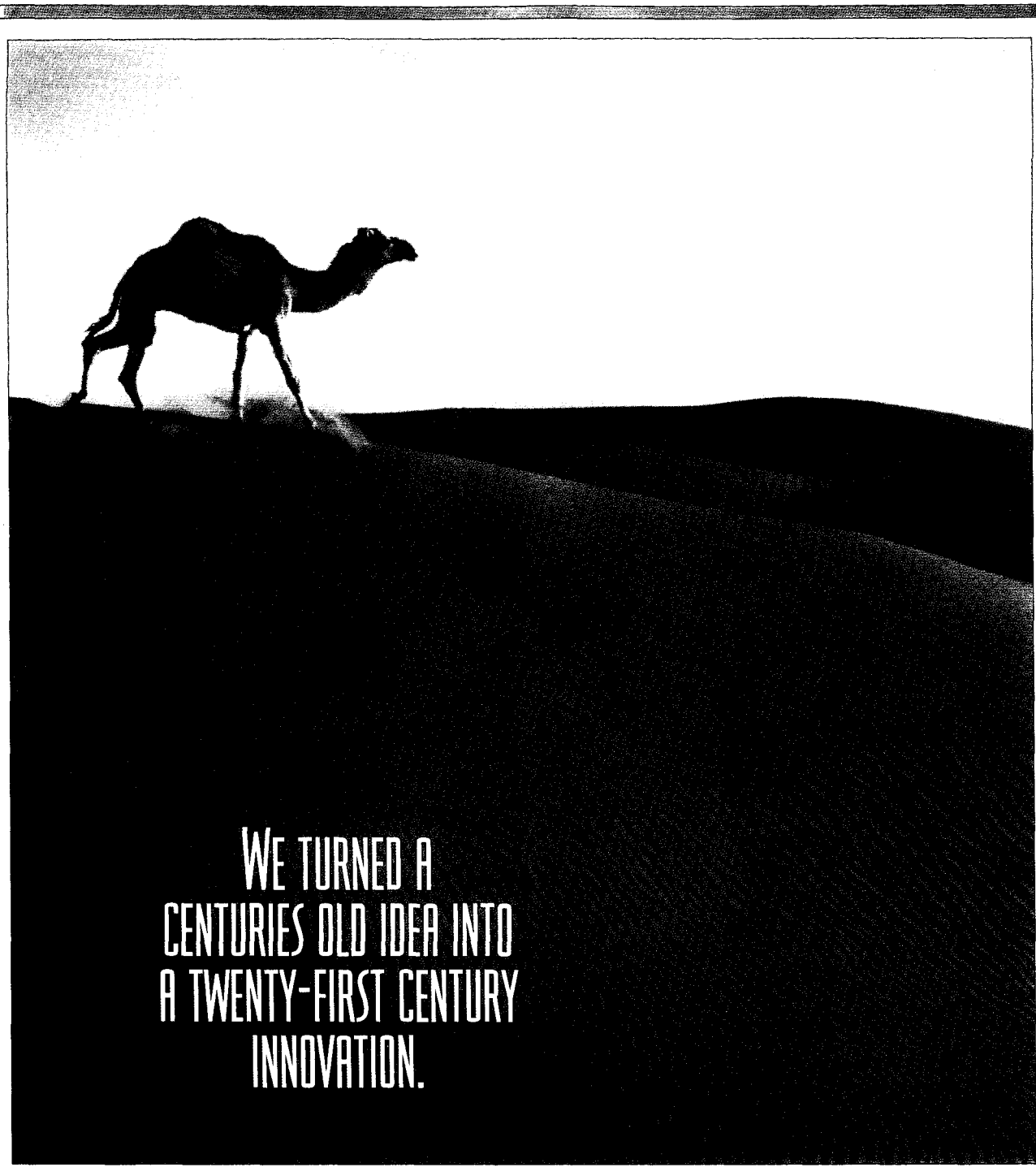

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THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

A National Magazine of Politics, Business, and Culture

November/December 1998 Vol. 9, No. 6

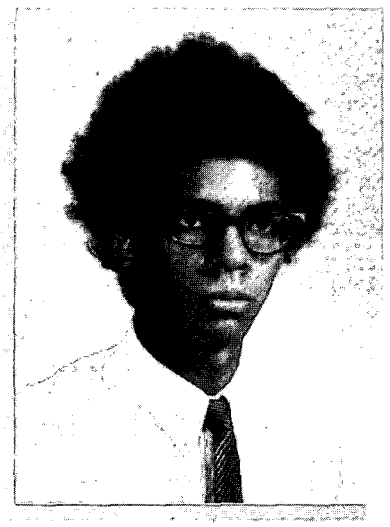
4 BIRD'S EYE
When black and white turn gray.

8 SIDELIGHTS
The Spice Girls fly Air Force One. Desperate Democrats. Gore's eco-crimes.

10 SCAN ◆ Short News and Commentary
Ben Stein on old racism and new. Hypocrites on parade. It didn't start with Monica. Al Sharpton, Democrat hero. Jews & guns. Deceased white males. Thanks for not voting!

18 INDICATORS ● Numbers etc.
American tolerance. The disappearing white-black income gap. Race, crime,and class.

20 "LIVE" WITH TAE
Richard Nixon's White House lawyer *Leonard Garment* talks about his boss, President Clinton, morality, and impeachment.



Page 38

24 THE GREATEST STORY NEVER TOLD
Deroy Murdock
Everyday America's racial harmony.

28 THE STRANGELY FRAGILE BLACK MIDDLE CLASS
Richard Miniter
Meet some people who confound both liberal and conservative clichés.

36 "WE WANT TO DEPEND ON OURSELVES"
Eli Lehrer
African immigrants reveal some of the many varieties of "blackness" in America.

38 OUT OF THE BOX
Bill Kauffman
Black intellectual Stephen Carter places his hope in local communities of the Christian faithful, not the civil rights establishment.

42 THE RISE OF THE BLACK INDEPENDENT
Andrew Peyton Thomas
The ranks of non-liberal blacks are growing. We profile some of the leaders, including Reggie and Sara White, Stanley Crouch, Ken Blackwell, Herman Cain, Kay Cole James, Ward Connerly, Ken Hamblin, J. C. Watts, and others. **Plus:** an excerpt from *Clarence Thomas'* powerful speech to the black lawyers' association.

48 WHEN RACE MATTERS, AND WHEN IT DOESN'T
Marvin Olasky • Hendrik Mills • Michael Lynch • Dinesh D'Souza
Firsthand reports on life in mixed-race families today.

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54 THE HATE THAT DARE NOT SPEAK ITS NAME
Ying Ma
A Chinese immigrant describes the black racism she grew up with. Why are Asian civil rights groups silent?

57 A DEADLY MIX
Hendrik Mills
Welfare state liberalism has brought devastation to American Indian reservations.

60 THE FIX
Nina Shokraii Rees
Radical school reform is the most compassionate thing anyone could do for poor minority kids.

62 BULWORTHLESS
Evan Gahr
By serving up left-over platitudes and purposely ignoring America's real problems, Clinton's "Race Initiative" has turned into a miserable flop.

65 WHAT CLINTON'S YEAR-LONG RAP ON RACE LEFT OUT
Jonetta Rose Barras • John Sibley Butler • Linda Chavez • John DiIulio • Larry Elder • Nat Hentoff • Ed Koch
A parade of iconoclasts sound off on race, markets, quotas, and heroes in America.

PAGE 57

70 TRANSCRIPT ◇ Words worth repeating
Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois debate the best strategy for advancing the black race.

73 IN REAL LIFE ◇ First-person America
◇ Salesman *Dale Anema* has a searing meeting of the minds at a hotel bar.
◇ Meteorite-vendor *Michael Casper* describes his far-out business.

75 THE ECONOMIST
The trendy crusade against "Environmental Racism" isn't just a fraud, it's a danger to the health and well-being of the urban poor.

78 FLASHBACK
The GOP's leading atheist.

79 HOLLYWOOD REPORT
The Reagan story Hollywood won't tell.

80 BOOK TALK
◇ John McClaughry—*Coolidge, An American Enigma* by Robert Sobel
◇ David Kopel—*Flawed Giant* by Robert Dallek
◇ Nicholas Stix—*Plagiarism and the Culture War* by Theodore Pappas
◇ Clay Waters—*A New Kind of Party Animal* by Michele Mitchell
◇ Martin Morse Wooster—*It Usually Begins with Ayn Rand* by Jerome Tuccille

85 THE DIGEST ◇ Summaries of Important Research
Los Millionarios…falling prices…saving schools with big classes…new info on the hazards of divorce.

90 OPINION PULSE ◇ The Latest Survey Data
Getting beyond race. What's holding blacks back? (Slim) differences between black and white parents.

94 THE MAIL
We miss DDT. Defending soccer. Echoes on day care.

98 LAST GASP

PAGE 62

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Bird's Eye

KARL ZINSMEISTER

When Black and White Turn Gray

"No whites, whether they are congressmen from Georgia or reporters from New York, understand Anacostia." Who said that a couple years ago about Washington, D.C.'s well-known all-black precinct? Al Sharpton? Maxine Waters? Some other prominent nurser of black grievance and separatism?

Nope. That was Newt Gingrich speaking. The leader of American conservatism was spouting his version of that motto of racial irredentists: "It's a black thing. You wouldn't understand."

Mr. Gingrich is wrong. Anacostia is not the moon. It is not so hard to understand for anyone who tries. I lived on its edge for nearly ten years, and on numerous occasions shopped, ate, picked up babysitters, swam, visited museums, hired construction helpers, rode my bike, got my car fixed, visited churches, and picnicked there. I've known plenty of people who lived in Anacostia (including one of the rare red-headed Irish graduates of Anacostia High). The government, schools, street life, and economy in Anacostia are much sicker than in most parts of our country, but the residents put their pants on one leg at a time just like anywhere else, and the weaknesses and strengths, social problems and assets, good people and bad people of Anacostia can be understood and addressed in the same way we address such things anywhere else.

So why does the Speaker of the House—who believes he has useful advice to offer Japanese bankers and Kosovo militiamen—think that Anacostia is inscrutable and entirely beyond his powers to improve? I'll tell you why: Because he has surrendered to what writer Fred Siegel has called a "political culture based on the organized cultivation of racial resentments."

Today, black activists (and plenty of white, brown, yellow, and red activists too) insist that race is a kind of trump card. "The militants of ethnicity now contend that the main objective of public education should be the protection, strengthening, celebration, and perpetuation of ethnic origins and identities," writes liberal historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. These militants have imposed as national orthodoxy the notion that race is the most important determinant of a person's life, that the majority white race is currently oppressing all other races, and that the majority culture can't possibly comprehend—*much less impose any expectations upon*—citizens who come from other racial backgrounds.

I'm not picking on Mr. Gingrich—his is only one example of a way of thinking that pervades most of today's national establishment. (Al Gore actually translated our national motto *E pluribus unum* a few years ago as "Out of one, many"—whereas it actually means "Out of many, one.") The argument that "black is black, and white is white, and never the twain shall meet" flourishes in its most virulent forms today on the Left side of the political and cultural spectrum. I cite a conservative spokesman only to show that this view has pretty much swept the field.

And it is a handy view for racial agitators to work under, because one of the first things it does is paralyze the moderate mainstream. This orthodoxy shouts at middle-class people: "How dare you comment on family life, or schooling, or work patterns, or crime problems in Anacostia (or any other troubled black area)!" It intimidates them out of analyzing or judging or acting to help solve the problems of our ghettos. It insists they lack some magic understanding and must therefore consign themselves to the sidelines. The field is thus left open to

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the agitators—the race-hustling, resentment-building, personal-power-grabbing Vernon Masons, Marion Barrys, and Willie Browns—instead. How convenient.

MILITANTS HAVE IMPOSED AS NATIONAL ORTHODOXY THE NOTION THAT RACE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT DETERMINANT OF A PERSON'S LIFE.

Treating race as a trump card, an unbridgeable chasm, the main source of social and individual failures, and the right criterion for distributing power, wealth, and public favors is wrong for many reasons.

First, the underlying premise that your race determines your status is false. Thanks to some fascinating data provided to me by Tom Smith of the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center (NORC), I can report that in the 1990s, the gap between "haves" and "have-nots" is much starker *within* white America than it is between average whites and average blacks. There are lots of whites who are no better off than blacks in income, education, and "privilege."

Specifically, when whites are divided into NORC's ethnic and religious subgroups, the largest single category is "white evangelicals" (most of them southerners). In the latest figures, white evangelicals actually average about half a year less schooling than the average black American (11.7 vs. 12.3 years). So who needs more help at the admissions office?

The NORC figures also show that this large group of white evangelicals has almost the same family income as blacks. Moreover, the monetary divide separating them from the whites at the top of the income ladder (Jews and Irish Catholics) is nearly *twice* as wide as the gap separating whites as a whole from blacks as a whole. So much for the crude picture of comfortable whites and pitiful blacks.

These are not abstractions for statisticians to argue over but crucial realities affecting everyday people. The important court case now proceeding against the University of Washington Law School, for example, involves a woman named Katuria Smith who grew up in poverty, raised by a single-parent along with three siblings. To pay for her undergraduate education Smith worked as a janitor, construction worker, and at a cattle auction. She went to community college at night, became a paralegal, and finally earned a business administration degree cum laude. Yet despite having an LSAT score in the 95th percentile and high college grades, she was denied admission to the law school—because she is white. The university admitted in court papers that "it had never denied admission" to a black student with the same test scores and grades as Smith. Why should this woman be turned away so a spot can be offered to Jesse Jackson's son?

Conventional liberal claims about race make less and less sense every day. As black reporter Juan Williams notes, "the old black-white argument that we are accustomed to is quickly becoming anachronistic. In Washington, D.C., for instance, we have seen Latinos riot against the black city government, saying that they are not getting their fair share and that the police department is insensitive to them." On page 54 of this issue you will find an article about another race conflict that has nothing to do with whites: a damaging one involving blacks and Asians. Clearly, the white oppressor-brown victim caricature has little power to explain the nation we now live in.

So: Knee-jerk racial reactions and the bad habit of filtering all our thinking by race are politically dangerous as well as factually misleading. Worse yet, these practices will (if we allow them to root) doom efforts to elevate individual lives and improve American society.

Our nation currently has many problems in need of attention: dangerous streets, lousy schools, abandoned children, lives and money wasted in addiction, sloth, and incompetence. Many of these traumas are conventionally blamed on race, or racism. But the truth is that in most of the sectors where we're having trouble today, race is not really the problem. Nor are race-based remedies the solution.

For instance, our urban underclass problems are not caused by race. They are caused by dysfunctional families and personal behaviors.

Our miserable urban public schools are afflicted not because they are black (parochial schools operate successfully with the same students). Rather, they are ineffective because they are organized as unaccountable monopolies.

The articles in this magazine by Eli Lehrer, Rich Miniter, John McWhorter, Bill Kauffman, and others make it clear that skin color doesn't prevent persons with ambition, skills, family strength, and discipline from succeeding today. The remarkable, unappreciated fact is that the "race penalty" is now basically gone from American life:

- Thomas Sowell notes in his new book *Conquests and Cultures* that among black, white, and Hispanic Americans of the same age with the same I.Q., average annual earnings are within $1,000 of each other.
- Christopher Jencks and Meredith Phillips report in their study *The Black-White Test Score Gap* that among men scoring at the 50th percentile on intelligence tests, blacks earn 96 percent of what whites do.
- The incomes of black married couples are now within a few percentage points of similar white couples. (See INDICATORS.)

Professor Sowell argues that much of what is currently labeled "racism" could more properly be called "behaviorism." Successful citizens feel aversion and disapproval not toward whole races in general, but toward individuals with negative behaviors and attitudes. And such aversion is well-founded, Sowell insists. A people's collective behaviors, attitudes, and habits—what researchers call "human capital"—need guarding, he concludes after extended study. "The cultural capital of a people is crucial to their economic and social advancement, whether that people is a racial minority, a nation-state, or a whole civilization." He warns that blaming "racism" for intergroup differences hinders "acquisition of the human capital or cultural capital needed to rise economically and socially."

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Most Americans take this same view: They believe the issues that matter most in our public life are now deeper than race, and that racial manipulations will do little to improve our cities, strengthen the economy, reduce crime, enrich our religious life, or otherwise aid the nation. You can see this in public opinion. A recent poll for Public Agenda, for instance, found that among blacks and whites both, roughly eight out of ten parents think schools are now focusing too much on race and thereby "neglecting their most important goal: teaching." Most Americans are so anxious to get away from racial excuse-making they don't even want the government to *count* the population by race any more (page 18). The remarkable polling data Karlyn Bowman has assembled on pages 90-93 provide many more examples of today's racial progress and the move away from blame-casting.

Americans want to downplay race partly because racial lines are becoming blurrier. When he described himself as "Cablinasian"—a mix of Caucasian, black, Indian, and Asian—golfer Tiger Woods hit a national nerve (much to the consternation of race activists). Record levels of culture-mixing and intermarriage in America are making separate ethnic boundaries more artificial every year. Racial borders are also becoming fuzzy in more symbolic ways. In recent elections, for example, there have been as many as 27 black Republican running for Congress in a single year.

More and more, Americans want to keep race in the closet, to minimize it in their thinking and decisionmaking—as the interracial families we profile on pages 48-52 do. Emphasizing race, the nation has learned, leads to fractures, favorites, and bad feelings. So we want to make our connections on other grounds as much as possible.

But one thing hinders this shift away from race-thinking: Racial rabble-rousing makes great politics. Grievance is the fuel of much political action, and there is no beef quite like a racial beef. Indeed, during the 1990s race has become a defining fault line in national politics, sharpened by everything from the O. J. Simpson defense to Bill Clinton's retreat to a loyal black electoral base while under fire. Novelist Toni Morrison even put an outrageous racial spin on the Ken Starr-Bill Clinton battle recently, describing Clinton as "white skin notwithstanding...our first black President" (because he's Southern, from a single-parent family, musical, etc.), now being lynched for his uppityness. (I kid you not—see the October 5 *New Yorker*.)

But race resentment is a double-edged sword. "Separatism, once unleashed, nourishes prejudices, magnifies differences, and stirs antagonisms," Arthur Schlesinger warns. And after being wielded often in the 1980s and '90s, the weapon of race resentment has begun to cut in ways not anticipated by the racism industry.

Specifically, there has been a strong public reaction in America against the use of race preferences. Consider the following question asked by the Gallup Poll:

> "Some people say that to make up for past discrimination, women and members of minority groups should be given preferential treatment in getting jobs and places in college. Others say that ability, as determined by test scores, should be the main consideration. Which point comes closest to how you feel on this matter?"

In the most recent result, support for preferences totaled only 11 percent.

Two decades of affirmative action have increased racial polarization and poisoned good feelings in ways small and big. This is illustrated in a piercing study conducted by professors Paul Sniderman and Thomas Piazza. The researchers divided a random sample of adults into two groups, then asked them (amidst many other dummy questions) to rate the character traits of black people. They also asked everyone the following question about affirmative action:

> In a nearby state, an effort is being made to increase dramatically the number of blacks working in state government. This means that a large number of jobs will be reserved for blacks, even if their scores on merit exams are lower than those of whites who are turned down for the job. Do you favor or oppose this policy?

Half the respondents came to the affirmative action scenario *after* they had already offered their characterization of black traits. The other half faced it *before* making out their list, and this latter group ended up expressing much less good will toward blacks. For instance, only 26 percent of respondents who had not yet seen the affirmative action question rated blacks as irresponsible. But among the people who *had* read the affirmative action question, fully 43 percent described blacks that way. The number of respondents checking "lazy" jumped from 20 percent to 31 percent after the affirmative action mention.

Russell Nieli of Princeton University notes that race preference policies have also backfired in other countries that have tried them (like Malaysia, India, and Nigeria). The "most common net effect" of racial preferences "is to increase inter-ethnic tensions and hostilities rather than to ease them," he reports. In many cases, the end result is violence, terrorism, or outright civil war.

We've learned in recent years that affirmative action can also inflict some nasty effects on the supposed beneficiaries. Stephan and Abigail Thernstrom point out that under preferential race admissions at the University of California at Berkeley, black undergrads were dropping out at the rate of 42 percent (compared to only 16 percent of whites). That not only blasts the self-confidence of many black youngsters, but also feeds impressions of black inferiority among other students—simply because many applicants have been promoted beyond their level of preparation.

Writer Glenn Loury contends that affirmative action "is overblown" as a political and cultural issue. Strictly speaking, he may be right. The number of individuals directly affected by a race quota in any given year is limited. There are lots of other issues with racial aspects—like crime, schooling, etc.—which are more consequential to everyday American life.

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Still, affirmative action is more important than it seems. For one thing, it is a flashing light advertising our government's official position on race. Even if government-sponsored preferences are directly favoring or disfavoring only a few million aspiring fire fighters, college applicants, contractors, and job seekers a year (out of 250 million Americans), nonetheless we're *all* indirectly affected by affirmative action's definition of what the relationship between individuals and the government should be.

THE UNAPPRECIATED FACT TODAY IS THAT THE "RACE PENALTY" IS BASICALLY GONE FROM AMERICAN LIFE.

Affirmative action makes it impossible to argue with a straight face, as Thurgood Marshall did so eloquently in his 1954 NAACP brief on *Brown v. Board of Education* that "Distinctions by race are so evil, so arbitrary and invidious that a state, bound to defend the equal protection of the laws must not invoke them in any public sphere." Once thrown away, this moral high ground will not be easily reclaimed. As Supreme Court Justice Powell warned in 1978, "the guarantee of equal protection cannot mean one thing when applied to one individual and something else when applied to a person of another color. If both are not accorded the same protection, then it is not equal."

Affirmative action says there are such things as collective racial destinies, collective racial guilt. It says goodies and punishments should be distributed by skin color, without regard to the actual behavior or worthiness of the individuals involved. And so some Korean woman who only arrived in the U.S. in the 1950s, and some Swedish-American kid whose family members fought and died so the slaves could be freed (360,000 white male Unionists paid with their lives, and millions more were maimed, to free 4 million slaves), are forced to make centuries-delayed penance to the grandchildren of black college professors and congressmen.

Race-based public policies have scores of subtle corrosive effects. They force people to think and act in terms of skin tone. They distort voting districts and national political representation. They prevent abandoned youngsters desperately in need of a mother and father from leaving foster care limbo, out of fear of placing them with the "wrong" color parents. They allow faceless bureaucrats to exert capricious control over the most crucial mileposts in the lives of individual men and women—college acceptance, scholarship availability, job offers, home purchases, adoption agreements, workplace promotions, how your taxes will be spent, where your child attends school, and so forth.

In the process, some grave moral injustices are committed against individual Americans—all in the name of *ending* unfairness. In a land where individual justice is the highest national aspiration, and the major object of our laws and social institutions, that is no small matter.

It is, therefore, a travesty that President Clinton's ballyhooed two-year "Race Initiative" has completely averted its eyes from the subject of race preferences. Think of it: A majority of Americans rate affirmative action as the most pressing race issue in the country. Residents of California and other states (including three out of ten blacks) have actually voted to eliminate preferences. And yet, when the President appoints a panel charged with conducting a national "dialogue" on race he refuses to seat even a single member who is skeptical of affirmative action!

But then, as our article on page 62 explains, this initiative didn't take up *any* substantial racial issue in a fair or productive way. The entire venture was little more than a public relations ploy, a way for a phony politician to be seen as someone wrestling with an issue of consequence. The charade was captured best by the White House's decision to stage a climactic meeting of the effort as a talk show on ESPN—the national sports entertainment network!

The first rule of manliness is to *be* and not just *seem*. Our current President lives by the reverse of this dictum. He is all pretense—full of rhetoric and lip-biting showmanship—and it is all empty. He lacks the fortitude to put principles into action. His obsession is how he *appears* to people (thus his slavish attachment to polling). Whether his actions are true to his words, or whether he actually achieves something useful in the world, are things he cares little about.

For instance: Just a couple years ago, President Clinton took up another burningly important national issue—immigration. He professed a determination to iron out some deep problems in this area and appointed a commission headed by Barbara Jordan to develop his plan of action. They labored to produce a report. And then, having already reaped his photo ops, the President dismissed the entire effort without another thought.

Actually straightening things out, you see, would have required some tussling, perhaps threatening his popularity. That's not how this President operates. Everything he really wanted from his "immigration commission"—some favorable publicity of him looking grave and can-do while engaging important national business—he gained just by making the appointments. It's unlikely he ever had any genuine intention of acting seriously on the problems uncovered.

This is the exact same template Clinton followed with his "Race Initiative." Mouth some ringing words with tears in your eyes. Appoint a show group and trade on the reputation of its members. Grab the spotlight at as many televised "town meetings" as the subject gives you an excuse to hold. And reap some cheap credit for taking up a serious matter. Then, after exploiting the issue, using the participants, and toying with the nation's good faith, dispose of the whole subject and all the lives it touches like a crumpled, soiled Kleenex.

It's ugly enough when the President does this to Irish Prime Ministers and interns. When he runs his cynicism machine over the stubblefield of race, he risks stirring up something deeper and potentially much more injurious to our country.

In the pages that follow we try to explore a tremendously consequential subject with honesty and seriousness. In the final report on Race in America that President Clinton has promised to present to the nation this December, you are, unfortunately, not likely to find much of either of those things.

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Sidelights

Reporters on Air Force One were surprised to see the Spice Girls' *Spice World* as their in-flight movie. President **Clinton** insisted he had not selected it. · · · **Geraldo Rivera**, a vocal defender of Clinton, wrote in his autobiography, "My marriage was important to me, and so I made sure my outside encounters never became more than one-night stands." · · · Oval Office T-shirts with fake stains are now sold in Washington, D.C. malls. ❧ The Pollak Agency of New Jersey rebelled against casual Fridays by hosting a black-tie Friday. ❧ Retired Air Force Brigadier General **Wilma Vaught** is a prominent supporter of women in combat, but she admits the movie *Saving Private Ryan* will hurt the cause "because when you look at what these guys were doing in the two big battle scenes, it's like, don't try to tell me a woman could do these kinds of things." · · · At least seven members of the co-ed aircraft carrier *Abraham Lincoln* participated in an orgy while on leave in Hong Kong. The Navy calls it an "isolated incident." ❧ The stock market tends to rise when the House of Representatives is out of session, a University of North Carolina study reports. "There's some temporary certainty while Congress is not making decisions," explains a researcher. ❧ The Human Rights Campaign, a homosexual advocacy group, has issued a 32-page manual for congressional candidates seeking the gay vote. Its foreword is co-authored by former Clinton adviser **George Stephanopoulos** and **Sheila Burke**, former chief of staff to **Bob Dole**. ❧ The AFL-CIO is crowing about having beaten back "paycheck protection" bills and initiatives in 28 states. ❧ Some unusual candidates are fielded by a desperate Democratic party, the *New Republic* observes: An Illinois candidate whose staff "gleefully calls him a 'pro-gun, pro-life gospel singer'"; an evangelical Christian Alabama Democrat who "opposes abortion and gun control, while backing a mandatory moment of prayer in school"; and a Kentuckian "who wouldn't even permit abortions for a victim of rape or incest." · · · **Steve Forbes** endorsed a ban on second- and third-trimester abortions on ABC's "This Week."

A woman who actually owed the IRS about $1,500 received a bill for $40,000,001,541.13. While the agency later corrected the record, the woman received no acknowledgement of the error and no apology. · · · The Tax Foundation reports that the per-capita federal tax burden will be 44 percent higher in 1998 than in 1992, and 65 percent higher than in 1988. ❧ Only 38 of *Forbes'* 400 wealthiest Americans are on the Federal Election Commission's list of the 400 largest federal campaign contributors, the National Taxpayers Union discovered. In the '96 election cycle, only 0.5 percent of contributions came from the *Forbes* 400. ❧ Calls to 1-900 sex lines from a D.C. government office cost taxpayers $11,377 in April and May. The calls were made from the District's Child Welfare Office, whose responsibilities include sheltering abused children. ❧ When **Martin Mawyer** of the Christian Action Network tried to exhibit controversial artwork supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, Capitol Hill police issued a warrant for his arrest on the charge of "indecency." · · · "The federal role in the arts," NEA chairman **William Ivey** says, "should be equal to our role in the Department of Defense." ❧ Between 1980 and '90, among men aged 18-40, native-born Americans were twice as likely to be incarcerated as recent immigrants, according to research by **Kristin Butcher** of Virginia Tech and **Anne Piehl** of Harvard. · · · "We do not classify any student by race. Students classify themselves, and then we assign them to their schools," explained a lawyer defending the San Francisco school district's racial quotas. · · · **Glenn Veasy**, a Virginia high school basketball coach who is black, was convicted of spray painting anti-black insults at three schools and stealing a printer used to leave messages at the crimes. He had repeatedly claimed in the past to have been the victim of racial crimes. ❧ A few years back, **Al Gore** wrote an introduction for a re-issue of **Rachel Carson**'s anti-pesticide tract *Silent Spring*. Visitors to his home have lately observed signs on the lawn warning of pesticide use. · · · The Monterey, California *Herald* recently noted that by kayaking in the Bay next to a sea otter, the Vice President had violated federal laws against disturbing marine mammals in a protected area. ❧ General **Paul W. Tibbets, Jr.**, who piloted the plane that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima, says of President Clinton, "I don't think I could even salute the man," adding, "You've got to be honest. You cannot lead troops if they're aware of even the smallest lie, because you won't have their trust." · · · In P.C. terms, the President is "differently moraled," cracks author **Noemie Emery**. —*SW*

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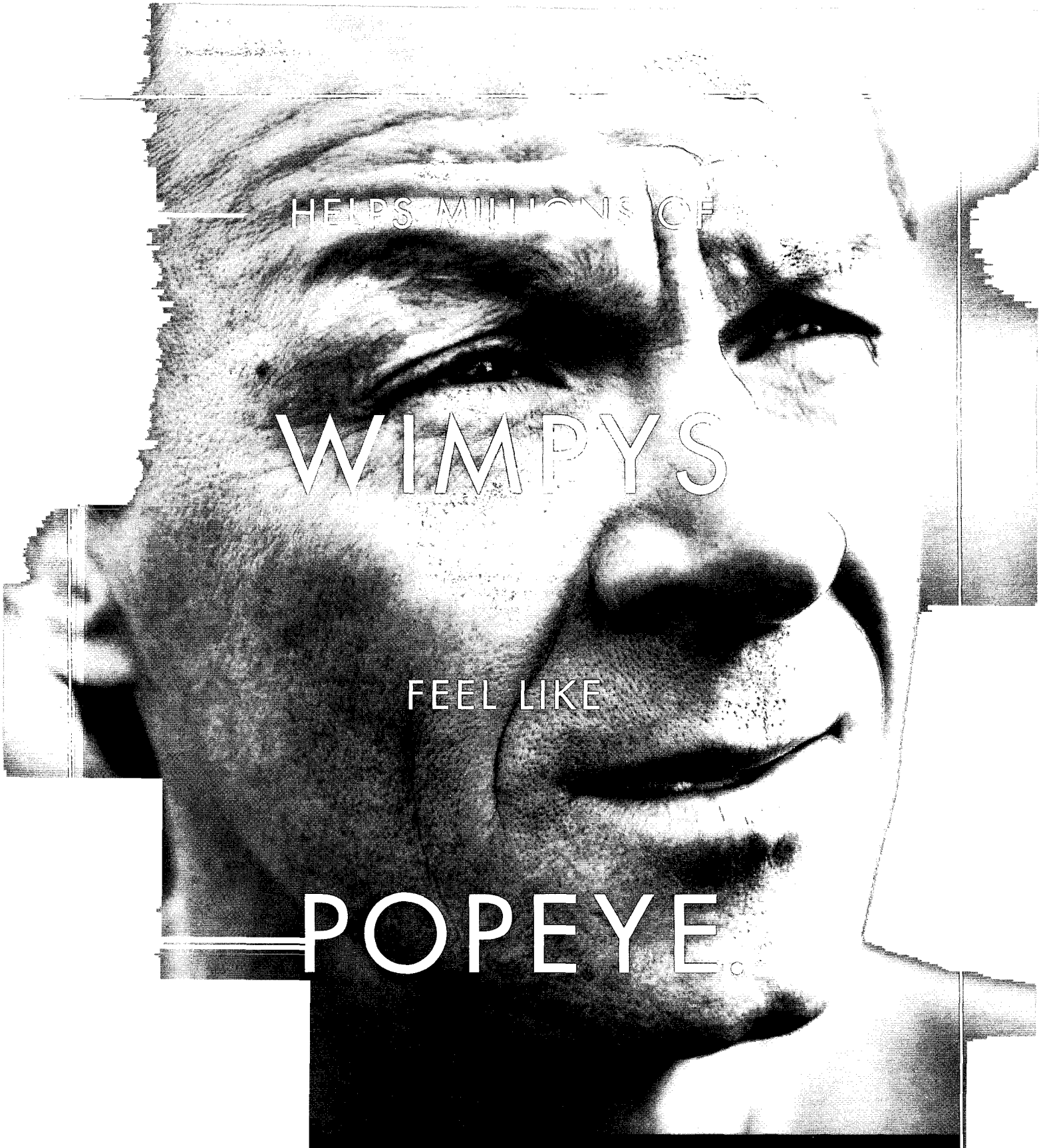

er, he knew what it felt like to run out of gas during a race. So he cooked up a batch of low-fat,
n his Berkeley kitchen. Selling them out of the trunk of his '64 Falcon, he created a healthy following
n dynamic company, *PowerBar, Inc.* With over $100 million in sales. Fearless entrepreneurs like
an Maxwell find a kindred spirit in Forbes. The business magazine that explores new trends and ideas while others rehash the past.

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SCAN

Candidate Bill Clinton at the presidential debate in Richmond, Virginia, October, 1992.

AP Photo/Marcy Nighswander

"THIS IS FUN"

Bill Clinton's extramarital shenanigans have never been "private" or "just about sex." From his first days in the governor's mansion in Little Rock, our ithyphallic President tossed aside claims to privacy when he used state troopers to facilitate his infidelities, bought his conquests' silence with government jobs, and employed squads of dirt diggers to intimidate his more troublesome companions.

In both the *Los Angeles Times* and the *American Spectator,* Arkansas state troopers Roger Perry, L. D. Brown, and Larry Patterson disclosed that Clinton had used them hundreds of times to facilitate his affairs. Yet another state trooper, Danny Ferguson, escorted Paula Jones, then a 24-year-old state employee, to Bill Clinton's room at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock on May 8, 1991.

Patterson twice filed complaints—to the captain in charge of Clinton's security and to the director of the Arkansas state police—about the inappropriateness of chauffeuring Clinton to Gennifer Flowers' apartment. Other troopers publicly told of Clinton's offers, after 1992, of federal jobs to buy their silence.

In *Blood Sport,* Pulitzer Prize-winner James B. Stewart reports that Clinton once confided, "This is fun" to Whitewater partner Susan McDougal, explaining why he loved being governor. "Women are throwing themselves at me. All the while I was growing up, I was the fat boy in the Big Boy jeans."

In 1987, as Clinton was set to announce his candidacy for the presidency, Clinton confidant Betsey Wright insisted on sitting down with him. Wright listed the women Clinton had allegedly had affairs with. "She went over the list twice with Clinton, according to her later account," reports David Maraniss in *First in His Class,* "the second time trying to determine whether any of the women might tell their stories to the press." Then she suggested he not enter the race. The next day, at a news conference intended to kick off his White House run, Clinton announced he wouldn't be a candidate.

But four years later, Clinton was back in the race and, within weeks, Betsey

HYPOCRITES IN HIGH PLACES: A CLINTON-GORE SAMPLER

"I think the country could be spared a lot of agony...if [Nixon would] go on and resign.... No question that an admission of making false statements to government officials...is an impeachable offense." *—Law professor Bill Clinton while campaigning for Congress, August 1974*

"Yes, the President should resign. He has lied to the American people, time and time again, and betrayed their trust. Since he has admitted guilt, there is no reason to put the American people through an impeachment. He will serve absolutely no purpose in finishing out his term, the only possible solution is for the President to save some dignity and resign."
—Candidate Bill Clinton, July 1974

"My first pledge will be to restore integrity to the White House. And I'll fire anyone who has lied to the American people or the United States Congress."
—Candidate Al Gore, at the February 1988 presidential debate

"I want an America where 'family values' live in our actions, not just in our speeches."
—Candidate Bill Clinton at the Democratic National Convention, August 1992

"We have seen the folks in Washington turn the American ethic on its head. For too long, those who play by the rules and keep the faith have gotten the shaft, and those who cut corners and cut deals have been rewarded."
—Candidate Bill Clinton at the Democratic National Convention, August 1992

"There's just no such thing as truth when it comes to him [George Bush]. He just says whatever sounds good and worries about it after the election." *—Candidate Bill Clinton, October 1992*

"Every time Bush talks about trust, it makes chills run up and down my spine. The very idea that the word *trust* could come out of Mr. Bush's mouth after what he's done to this country and the way he's trampled on the truth is a travesty." *—Candidate Bill Clinton, October 1992*

"The road to tyranny, we must never forget, is the destruction of the truth."
—President Bill Clinton, October 1995

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Wright and her list were at his side. After Gennifer Flowers publicly acknowledged her affair with Clinton, Wright was persuaded to join the Clinton campaign to prevent, in her words, further "bimbo eruptions."

"You can't imagine the number of dastardly deeds and undeeds that were conveyed to me on a daily basis," Wright told a congressional hearing. Her task, as described by the *Washington Post,* was to identify potential accusers in advance and collect information to discredit them. "Women were called and told they'd make them look like whores if they came forward," explains Rex Nelson of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.*

Or worse. Sally Perdue, a former Miss Arkansas, contends a Democratic operative in Illinois warned that her "pretty little legs" might be broken if she continued to speak publicly about Clinton's dancing around her apartment in one of her nightgowns, playing his saxophone and snorting cocaine. Dolly Kyle Browning says her brother, a Clinton campaign aide, warned her that she would be "destroyed" if she didn't keep quiet.

And today, after Monica Lewinsky's reported warning to Linda Tripp that she and her children would be "in danger" if she didn't testify the right way on the Kathleen Willey episode, the FBI has Tripp sequestered in a "safe house," while Willey, after finding her tires slashed, reports being approached by a stranger who named her children and warned, "I hope you're getting the message."

The lesson? When it comes to Bill Clinton, there's nothing new, except that his squalid narcissism and adolescent self-indulgence have moved to a larger stage.

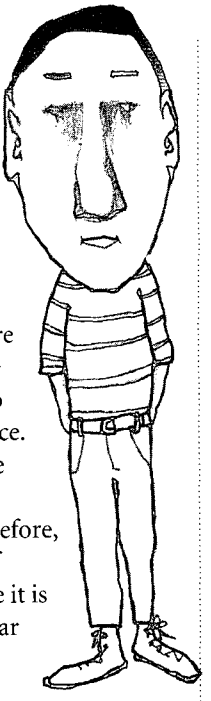
*—**Ralph R. Reiland** is associate professor of economics at Robert Morris College in Pittsburgh.*

THE BILLY PULPIT

This scene, undoubtedly occurring right now somewhere in America, comes to us from the Internet underground.

DAD: Son, come in here, we need to talk.

SON: What's up, Dad?



DAD: There's a scratch down the side of the car. Did you do it?

SON: I believe, if I correctly understand the definition of "scratch the car," that I can say, truthfully, that I didn't scratch the car.

DAD: Well, it wasn't there yesterday, and you drove the car last night, and no one else has driven it since. How can you explain the scratch?

SON: Well, as I've said before, I have no recollection of scratching the car. While it is true that I did take the car out last night, I did not scratch it.

DAD: But your sister, Monica, told me she saw you back the car against the mailbox at the end of the driveway, heard a loud scraping sound, saw you get out to examine the car, and then drive away. So again I'll ask you, "yes" or "no," did you scratch the car?

SON: I don't agree with your contention that you have evidence to prove I scratched the car. You see, I understood you to mean did "I" scratch the car. I stand by my earlier statement, that I did not scratch the car.

DAD: Are you trying to tell me you didn't drive the car into the mailbox?

SON: Well, you see, sir, I was trying to drive the car into the street. I mishandled the steering of the car, and it resulted in direct contact with the mailbox, though that was clearly not my intent.

DAD: So you did hit the mailbox?

SON: No, sir, that's not my statement. I'll refer you back to my original statement that I did not scratch the car.

DAD: But the car did hit the mailbox, and the car did get scratched as a result of this contact?

SON: Well, yes, I suppose you could look at it that way.

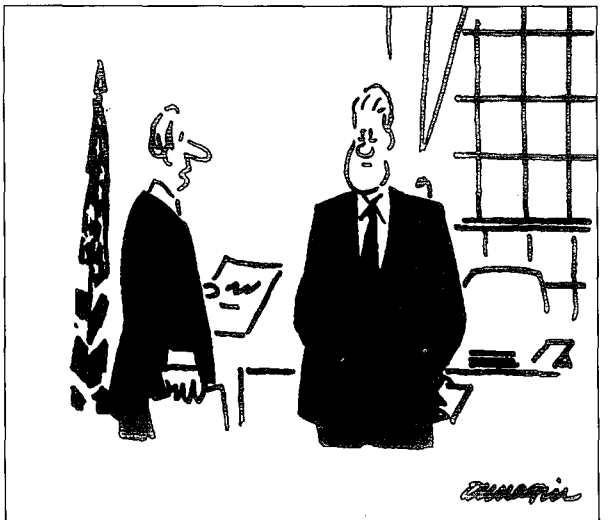
DAD: So you lied to me when you said you did not scratch the car?

SON: No. No, that's not correct. Your question was, Did I scratch the car. From a strict legal definition, as I understood the meaning of that sentence, I did not scratch the car; the mailbox did. I was merely present when the scratching occurred. So my answer of "No" when you asked did I scratch the car was legally correct, although I did not volunteer information.

DISCOUNTS FOR THE WEALTHY

What if businesses and government agencies offered special prices for white people? Or people who wear glasses? Or Southerners? Just prove you're a member of the privileged group and receive a discount.

Sounds unfair, right? So why does the country put up with discounts for senior citizens—the wealthiest sector of the American public? Currently, the average 70-year-old has 18 percent more spending power than the average 30-year-old. Census Bureau data indicate that median net household wealth for people over 65 is $88,000, while median net household wealth for all ages is only $36,000. A higher percentage of persons over 65 own primary residences, mutual funds, stocks, bonds, retirement accounts, and savings bonds than any other age group. Census Bureau data also show that those 65 years and older have a lower poverty rate than other age groups. If American business wants to assist the disadvantaged, families raising children would be a much more appropriate target.



"Your approval rating is high...unless the people in the polls are lying."

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Many seniors think they're entitled to discounts, no matter how well-off they are. A reporter for the Fort Lauderdale *Sun-Sentinel* quotes a 24-year-old manager: "I'm in the cable business, and these older people in mansions are always asking me, 'Don't we get a discount? Don't we get free cable?'"

Senior citizen discounts were created before the aged won their current privileged attachment to the public purse. They breed resentment among the young. They are probably unconstitutional.

It's time to retire the senior citizen discount.

—Ted Rueter is the author of The Politics of Race.

JEWS AND GUNS

New Republic editor Jonathan Cohn recently wrote that he had never touched a gun and never wished to do so. From this one can conclude, among other things, that Cohn never served in the armed forces—and that he never met Sergeant Lee.

I never knew Lee's first name; to me and the other boys in his high school ROTC class, he was "Sergeant." All he revealed of his World War II service was that he was leading an infantry platoon across a field when he was hit by a German bullet.

He had three rows of ribbons across his chest, including the Combat Infantry Badge and the Purple Heart, which I admired because it meant he had shed his blood to defend freedom against the Nazis. As a Jew, this was especially meaningful to me. It was 1949, and the war was fresh in everyone's memory. Even the rowdiest boys shut up when Sergeant Lee entered the room; we knew to whom we owed our freedom.

Our class was an odd mix of boys considering military careers, misfits who didn't like physical education, and college-bound kids. I intended to go to Berkeley, which like other state universities required two years of ROTC for all male students. If I took three years of high school ROTC, I needed only one year in college, leaving more time for pre-med studies.

One day we met on the rifle range. Yes, Washington High School in San Francisco had a rifle range in the basement. Despite this, or perhaps in part because of it, there was not one shooting, stabbing, or serious fight in my years at this middle-class, multi-ethnic public high school. Perhaps the cause of violence is not guns but uncivilized males. Perhaps the reason we felt no need to join gangs, cults, or private militias was that we had been taught we were already members of a special group: Americans.

As the class began, Sergeant Lee discussed firearm safety. In mid-sentence, he picked up the .22 caliber rifle on his desk, pointed it at the wall, and pulled the trigger. There was a deafening bang as the blank went off. When Sergeant Lee told us every gun must be assumed loaded unless we had personally checked it, and that a gun must never be pointed at anything we were not ready to destroy, there was no need for repetition. We had learned gun safety in one vivid lesson.

I recall a mixture of pride and anxiety when Sergeant Lee handed me a .22, the first gun I had ever touched. I was only 14, but I had grown up on war movies, and being handed my first gun had more meaning than my youthful vocabulary could express. It represented entry into manhood quite as much as had my bar mitzvah a year before. By receiving the rifle from Sergeant Lee, as I had by receiving the blessing from my rabbi, I was saying, "Yes, I accept the responsibilities of manhood, knowing that they may be difficult or even dangerous."

My generation, raised on war news and war movies, reached maturity in the 1950s, which were marked by a homicide rate about half the current rate and the lowest suicide rate on record. Could it be that it is not violence that desensitizes us, but meaningless violence? Could images of brave soldiers dying for freedom have a different effect than images of mindless people dying for nothing? Could it be that accepting my first gun from Sergeant Lee, rather than from an older gang member, gave me a different ideal of manhood to strive for?

Mr. Cohn derides the idea that if more European Jews had owned guns, fewer Jews would have died in the Holocaust and more Nazis would have died trying to round them up. I suggest he study the Warsaw ghetto uprising, where a few obsolete guns enabled the Jews to hold at bay for a month at least 3,000 S.S. troops armed with tanks, artillery, and flame throwers, and to inflict on the Nazis more than 100 casualties. I suggest he read *Schindler's List,* which notes that Schindler's bravest action was to steal guns from the Nazis and give them to the Jews.

I suggest Cohn read *Targeting Guns* by professor Gary Kleck, which documents how over 2 million times a year, Americans use guns to fend off criminal attackers. I suggest he read *More Guns, Less Crime* by professor John Lott, which documents how states that license law-abiding citizens to carry guns enjoy lower violent-crime rates than other states, with no significant increase in suicides or gun accidents.

Cohn says Aaron Zelman, head of Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership, is not his kind of Jew. The question is, Which kind of Jew is more likely to assure the continued existence of our people, or of freedom?

—David C. Stolinsky practices medicine in Los Angeles.

BRAIN WARPS

- Why do they put Braille on the drive-through bank machines?
- What do you do when you see an endangered animal eating an endangered plant?
- I went to a bookstore and asked the saleswoman, "where's the self-help section?" She said if she told me, it would defeat the purpose.
- Why don't sheep shrink when it rains?
- Can vegetarians eat animal crackers?
- If the police arrest a mime, do they tell him he has the right to remain silent?
- If a mute swears, does his mother wash his hands with soap?
- If a man is standing in the middle of the forest speaking and there is no woman around to hear him, is he still wrong?

—courtesy of Steven Wright

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SLAVERY LIVES

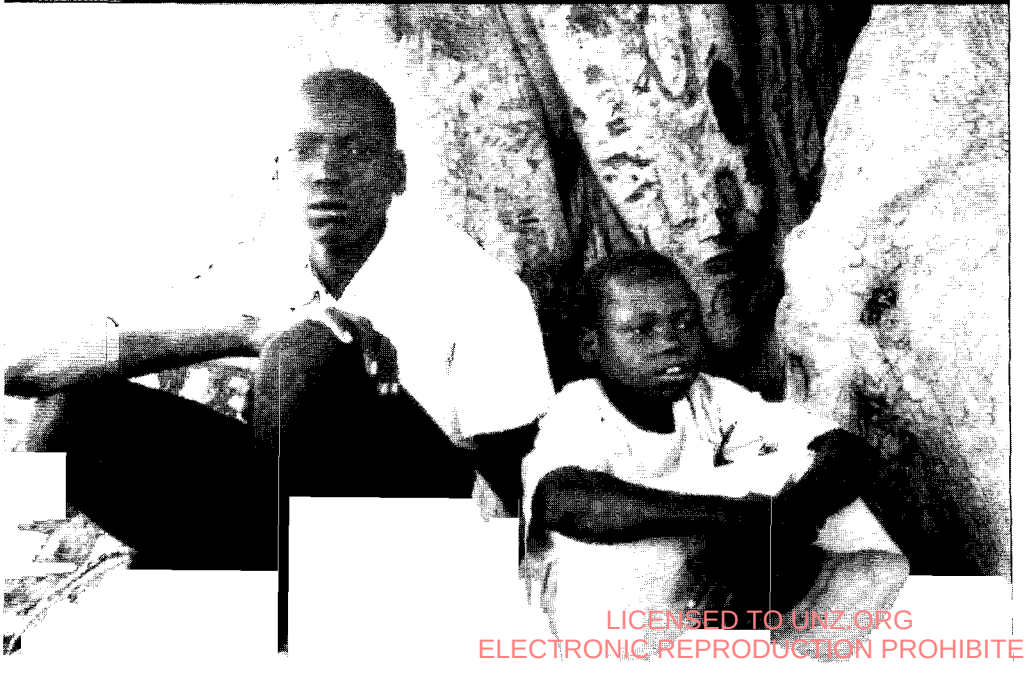
As the United States continues to cope with problems growing out of our slaveholding history, it's sobering to realize slavery is still practiced in the 1990s—in Africa. In the Sudan, a charitable organization called Christian Solidarity International is buying slaves (for a few hundred dollars each) and setting them free. There are reports of slavery in West Africa, too, including in Nigeria and Mauritania (where an estimated 90,000 persons are owned outright, and another 200,000 are indentured servants). Many of these slaves are Christians held in non-Christian lands.

When Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam insisted in a National Press Club speech that slavery did not exist in Africa, the *Baltimore Sun* sent reporters Gilbert Lethwaite and Gregory Kane on a risky mission to the Sudan, where the reporters purchased two half-brothers, ages 10 and 12, in the village of Manyiel. The reporters paid about $1,000, then delivered the boys back to their father.

The Arab slaver, Adam El Haj, said that the abduction of children into slavery was being organized by the Islamic government in the Sudan. The U.S. State Department and human rights groups estimate there are tens of thousands of other slaves in the Sudan.

AP Photo/Baroness Caroline Cox

BolBol Kuol, 13, and his brother Deng Kuol, 6, who along with their mother were kidnapped into slavery by Arab militia in the Sudan in 1988, shown here after their escape.



THE OTHER DAVID DUKE

He peddles wild conspiracy theories, traffics in raw bigotry, and incites protesters. David Duke? Nope. The Reverend Al Sharpton. The GOP, of course, vehemently denounced Duke shortly after the former KKK leader ran for office as a Republican. But as Sharpton increasingly wraps himself in the Democratic mantle, the entire party establishment from President Clinton down welcomes him with open arms.

Last year, Sharpton sought the party's nomination for New York mayor with virtually no protest from local and national Democrats. And this January, Sharpton even exchanged a warm public hug with President Clinton.

The Democrats' cozy relationship with Sharpton reveals an unfortunate willingness to countenance bigotry, given that Sharpton has done everything from denouncing Jewish "diamond merchants" to calling a Harlem storeowner "a white interloper" just months before his shop was burned to the ground. Most recently, Sharpton was found guilty of defamation in connection with the infamous Tawana Brawley hoax he rode to fame a decade ago.

In January, during his defamation trial, Sharpton hosted a forum for New York Democratic senatorial candidates at his National Action Network headquarters. Every major Democratic hopeful—Geraldine Ferraro, Representative Charles Schumer, and Mark Green—attended. Very few city power brokers could accomplish that.

Nor were the Democrats embarrassed about attending. "Sharpton's done some foolish things that are indefensible," Green explained, but "I happen to work well with him." This casual attitude toward a man whose words and deeds should have rendered him a pariah can't help but embolden him. Once relegated to the fringes of polite society, he's now emerging as a political player. How long will the Democratic party, through silence and outright collusion, make common cause with Sharpton's insidious agenda?

—New York City writer ***Evan Gahr*** *appears regularly in* The American Enterprise.

THE 4 PERCENT SOLUTION

Disturbed that the first class selected without racial preferences contained fewer minority students, the University of California's Latino Eligibility Task Force released a report exclaiming "*Ya basta!*" ("enough is enough"). It urged SAT scores be eliminated from the admissions process so more Latinos would be accepted. University president Richard Atkinson called the plan "interesting," but support faded after a study revealed that if grades were emphasized more in admissions, only five percent more Latinos and 18 percent *fewer* blacks would be admitted.

Which doesn't mean U.C. won't try to devise other means to dodge Proposition 209, the 1996 referendum prohibiting racial preferences in state college admissions. The latest scheme is the "4 percent plan," which would guarantee admission to the U.C. system to the top 4 percent of students from each California high school, regardless of SAT scores. Under the plan, an estimated 700 more blacks and Latinos would be admitted.

The U.C. Regents immediately expressed concern the plan would lower academic standards. "A third of the state's 858 high schools send few students to the university—and 50 send none," the *Los Angeles Times* discovered. Requiring that all students graduating in the top 4 percent of their high school automatically be

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admitted would punish students attending excellent high schools and reward those attending mediocre ones.

Some critics (including Regent David S. Lee) speculated that guaranteed admission would lessen the pressure on high schools to improve student performance. Others (such as Regent Tom Sayles) thought the measure would induce parents to shop for the least competitive high school. Making class rank the determining factor may also discourage students from taking more difficult courses (especially if the Regents approve a proposal to eliminate extra grade points for honors classes).

California's "4 percent" plan is modeled after a similar one in Texas, where state and university officials have also tried frantically to bypass legal bans on affirmative action. The Texas legislature recently guaranteed state college spots to students in the top 10 percent of their high school class, but results have been disappointing: This year, the first under the 10 percent solution, black and Hispanic enrollment at U.T. Austin, the state's flagship campus, is up only slightly.

Although U.T. officials insist the quality of the student body will not be diluted, they are now expanding remedial programs for "at-risk" students admitted under the new law. But no one knows if that will be enough. William Forbath and Gerald Torres, two proponents of the 10 percent system at U.T. law school, concede that "many of the students graduating in the top 10 percent of the state's poorer high schools will prove unready for U.T.," and that remedial programs "may prove insufficient."

The president of U.T. Dallas, who also supports the 10 percent system, likewise confessed "there's a person who we admitted under the new law that graduated in the top 9 percent of the class, but has a composite SAT score of less than 700 [out of 1600]. It's just not a good situation."

*—**Kevin Butler** is a student at the University of Texas Austin.*

DEAD WHITE MALES

These days, colleges replace "dead white males" with "persons of color" wherever possible in their curricula. But the dead white males retain at least one stronghold: med school labs.

Yes, the old boys' network is alive and well: Cadavers of color are rare. Perhaps medical schools should implement an immediate affirmative action program to recruit more minority bodies. To further racial justice, candidates might be urged to die as soon as possible. The donors would never suffer the "inferiority worries" said to plague many affirmative action beneficiaries, and of course, the preferences need not entail rigid quotas. Instead, schools should concentrate on outreach efforts and other measures designed to make the labs more inclusive.

As things now stand, snagging one of these plum positions is harder than you may think. State schools use unclaimed bodies, but elite schools generally use donated bodies. At George Washington University medical school in Washington, D.C., potential donors face stiff competition. The school uses just 60 cadavers per year. "We turn away a lot of people. Many more offer than there is space," says anatomy department acting chair Jeffrey Rosenstein.

Dr. Rosenstein says the schools' cadavers come from all races, but are top heavy with whites. Given that D.C. is overwhelmingly black, GWU would do well to recruit more minorities. Ditto for other schools. Yet many white male doctors adamantly oppose such efforts. In New York City, Adam, a Mount Sinai hospital anesthesiologist who wouldn't give his last name, says skin color is "irrelevant in medical care. It doesn't matter if you see a cadaver of color. A cadaver doesn't talk to you, ask questions, or have needs or wants. One heart looks like another heart."

Expect more such facile evasions as affirmative action takes hold on this new frontier. We can already envision angry white males, worried they'll lose out to less-qualifed black cadavers, protesting that greater diversity on the marble tables will come "over my dead body."

*—**Evan Gahr** writes regularly for* The American Enterprise. *The facts and quotations in this article are real.*

JESSE JACKSON TRIES ON A FREE-MARKET WIG

"Expansion of the marketplace and inclusion are the keys to economic growth," Jesse Jackson declared with supply-side fervor at Harvard Law School this spring. "When [racial] walls come down, there's always growth. Let the market flow to the black and brown." The large crowd of corporate lawyers-in-training gave Jackson a standing ovation.

This is the new Jesse Jackson: Gone are the jeremiads against white America. Now he peppers speeches with talk of expanding the market and enlarging the pie, sounding more like Jack Kemp than Al Sharpton.

Jackon's newfound emphasis on economic growth has earned him plaudits from unlikely quarters. One Wall Street executive told the *New York Daily News*, "What I found pleasantly surprising is that when we sat down with Jesse Jackson, he was focused on enlightened self-interest." Jackson biographer Marshall Frady gushed, "For a civil rights apostle, he has always tended to be a booming believer in the free enterprise system."

Has Jackson become a free marketeer? Not exactly. He has merely given a more palatable spin to his old liberal economic message, gaining access to Wall Street-types who would have ignored him in the past. During his Harvard lecture Jackson was asked how to help the poor. "Increase the minimum wage." What about the disintegration of the family? "More government spending on child care." What about minorities? "What's missing from Clinton's race initiative is money."

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Whites prospered, Jackson says, because of a "100-year period of the great give-away" (railroads, Homestead Act lands, and other public goods), which he labels "white affirmative action." Because "white wealth was built by government largesse," it's only fair blacks should now build wealth through governmental programs. Jackson never explains that most of today's whites came to America after the distribution of western lands, and that many of them (Jews, Irish, Chinese, etc.) faced discrimination too.

When a black student asked what upper-middle-class blacks should do to help their less well-off brethren, Jackson dismissed his concern as a "diversion": What really matters are things like stopping the MCI-WorldCom merger. Saying "religion surpasses all," a black woman asked what role religion should play in the black community. The Reverend answered by dismissing school prayer as a "silly issue," then obliquely defending Clinton: "it's simplistic to measure character so narrowly" (on adultery only). The young woman, befuddled, just sat down.

She wasn't the only one puzzled. Harvard had invited grade-school students from inner-city Boston, and by the end of the speech most had become restless and left. Smart kids—while Jackson was lecturing about the market, these black youngsters were selling pens outside the hall to raise funds for their community group. I asked one black girl if she had listened to his speech. "Not really," she replied. I was about to ask why not, but she was too busy working customers to pay attention to me. Maybe hope is still alive.

—Kenneth Lee, a student at Harvard Law School, writes regularly for The American Enterprise.

ONE BY ONE

When I was growing up in Silver Spring, Maryland, 40 years ago, I knew racism firsthand. The best neighborhoods in D.C. had restrictions against blacks, Jews, and Asians. So did the best private schools, the best clubs, prestigious law firms and banks. It's been a long time, but I still feel a powerful twinge when I drive by the Chevy Chase Club. When I was a teenager I wanted to blow the club house up, knowing I would not be allowed to join. Life was far worse for blacks, whose mistreatment was truly miserable.

Time has passed. Racism is still bad, of course, but today there's a different kind of racism that is supposedly anti-racist, yet still a form of discrimination. In the new racism, certain groups are accorded preferred status, and once again it hurts people. At many schools, non-whites are given preference in admissions, and secret but real preference in grades. Blacks and Hispanics with mediocre records are taken into jobs at firms they could not come near if they were white or Asian. (I see this in my law school teaching, where the only students who receive offers from top law firms are the very best whites or extremely ordinary non-whites.)

This hurts the kids who are rejected. It hurts the clients who receive sub-par service from quota hires. It hurts the people hired, because someone who is patronized knows he's been patronized.

Then there is another, even uglier form of the New Racism: We are not allowed to tell the truth about race any longer. We cannot talk about the wildly disproportionate incidence of violent crime by non-whites, because that would be racist. If we do talk about it, we have to blame white racism. Kweisi Mfume of the NAACP is allowed to complain about how few black law clerks the justices of the Supreme Court have hired—but no one is allowed to give the reason any law teacher knows: A shortage of brilliant black law students. (I hasten to add that I was not a brilliant law student either.)

The old racist America lived an obvious lie: America was a free society with equal rights for all. In the new racist America, you cannot tell obvious truths: that force-fed racial integration—while a moral imperative—helped to kill the public schools in large parts of America (spurring a new segregation); that, so far, not all racial groups are contributing equally to the good things and bad things in American life. In the old racist America, non-whites could not get service jobs interacting with the public as, say, airline reservationists. In the new racist America, you cannot tell the truth that many whites avoid dealing with a black woman who answers the phone at an airline because they fear incompetence.

But it's complicated. Despite being horribly mistreated in America for centuries, many blacks serve their country handsomely today, better than some whites born to great privilege. But does patronizing blacks as a group help any individual? Do official preferences account for today's many black success stories, or is it individual effort? Can government controls fix the problems of race? Or is the best strategy the one followed by Jews and Koreans and Chinese and Vietnamese: scrimping, working, saving, studying, one by one? If that's not the way for non-whites to move ahead today, what is? How can the lives of non-whites be improved without sacrificing the rights of others or truth? It's the most morally vital issue of our time.

—Ben Stein is a writer, actor, and lawyer in Los Angeles.

NOTHING UNDERPRIVILEGED ABOUT THESE SCALPERS

The *Land Use Law Report* recently reported that the Shakopee Sioux Indians of Minnesota earn $600,000 per year per tribe member from their gambling operations.

MARCHING FOR LITERACY

Civil rights hero James Meredith is still marching—but now he's headed for the library. As a young Korean War vet, Meredith made history in 1962 when he defied white mobs to become the University of Mississippi's first black student. Today, Meredith, 65, has a new crusade: teaching blacks proper English. Illiteracy, he contends, is the chief obstacle to black progress. Unless blacks can master the English language, "we're not going to solve the problem of the black race and education."

In the last two years, he has led marches in towns all over Mississippi to promote proper English. Typically, he begins at City Hall and ends at the library, a location that too few blacks know, he laments.

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A U.S. Marshal escorts James Meredith to classes at the University of Mississippi, October 2, 1962.

AP Photo

In order to make the black male "as comfortable in the library as he is on the basketball court" Meredith holds weekend seminars at a local Jackson, Mississippi church. There he teaches black males—ages 8 to 80—how to read and write. "How they going to do anything if they don't read? I tell them to become intellectual giants; if they learn the rules, then they can become an intellectual giant."

The literacy crusade confirms Meredith's penchant for self-sufficiency. In his view, society's once-noble goal of full black participation has given way to a "dependency mentality"—fostered by black and white liberals who use government handouts to increase their own power.

No wonder he doesn't want taxpayer dollars for his current effort. But suppose folks who take his class can't afford the required textbooks? "With $150 gym shoes on? What are you taking about?." He cites an elderly man who walked three miles to the seminar. "He ain't got a car but paid his money to get the book."

Meredith emphasizes only reading and writing proper English. He says that if blacks talk jive that isn't necessarily a problem; Henry Kissinger never suffered for his thick German accent.

Sadly, academic success is considered "white" among many blacks. To that end, Meredith tells blacks to think of proper English as a "foreign language." He explains that when Vietnamese immigrants learn English and get good jobs, "they're not trying to be white; they're trying to become competitive." His students quickly get the point, he says.

Improving Mississippi's position at the bottom of the U.S. literacy charts is a daunting challenge. Nevertheless, Meredith, a gruff but unassuming man known for having quirky views on a number of subjects, hardly seems worried. After all, quite some time ago he showed the nation that one man can make a world of a difference.

THE NORTH ATLANTIC UNION

Britain has long been more closely attached to the U.S. than to its continental European brethren. Now Britain's influential *Daily Telegraph* has taken to arguing that the U.K. should formalize those loyalties. Instead of melding further into the increasingly statist European Union (E.U.), Britain should seek membership in NAFTA, the U.S./Canada/Mexico free trading pact that is already negotiating outward links with South American and Scandinavian countries.

Margaret Thatcher and several prominent Tories have signed on to this effort. Speaker Newt Gingrich has given the idea his blessing, and Senator Phil Gramm (R-Tex.) has introduced a bill that would make Britain an associate member of NAFTA. Other newspapers are climbing on board, with the populist London *Sun* urging British Prime Minister Tony Blair to "Look west young man."

British Europhiles protest that joining NAFTA would force Britain to kowtow to America, but the *Telegraph* dismisses as "preposterous" the claim that NAFTA "could pose more of a threat to its members' sovereignty than the E.U." As for the possibility that Europeans might retaliate against such a move by the British, the *Telegraph* points out that "British exports to the U.S. are rising, while exports to Europe are falling."

The case for a British turn toward America, the paper concludes, "does not simply rest on affinity of language, culture, or political values. It is based on hard economic calculation."

THANK YOU FOR NOT VOTING!

"How many stripes would the American flag have if we removed a stripe for every half-million people who don't vote?" That's the first line in a public service announcement by the Ad Council that sets my teeth on edge. By the time the spot ends, we've lost all of our stripes and stars and are left waving nothing but a white flag.

Myself, I'm all in favor of apathy. If I were writing public service announcements, I would urge more voters to stay home.

Recently, over 20 percent of the voters in the Democratic senatorial primary in Oklahoma voted for a candidate who had been dead for several weeks. Giving Oklahoma voters the benefit of the doubt, perhaps this was a call for limited government. But in a Democratic primary? No, I'm afraid the only explanation is ignorance. If there were any justice in this world, those voters would never be allowed to vote again.

The latest move toward widening the franchise is voter registration at driver's license bureaus. This is the height of foolishness. The people who drive on the roads with you every day already threaten you each time you start your car, and now we're encouraging them to vote! The last time I renewed my license, the conversation between the clerk and the fellow in front of me went something like this: "Are you registered to vote?" "I don't know." "Would you like me to register you?" "I guess." Next thing you know, we'll be sending him a postcard ballot already filled out, with a line for him to mark X by his name.

If we think elections are less meaningful because less than half the population bothers to vote, why have elections at all? Why not just have a national polling day, call up 1,200 people, and get a true pic-

CHECKING OUT ON THE CHECK-OFF

Despite a torrent of newspaper editorials demanding that politicians be given tax dollars to finance their campaigns, Americans continue to refuse even the most trifling donation: The Internal Revenue Service reports that only 12 percent of income tax returns it received through April 17 had the box checked that would send $3 to the presidential election campaign fund.

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ars are human rights he
d applaud you for your fight and contribu-
First Amendment freedom.
President Nadine Strossen in a recent speech to the World Pornography Conference.

ture of the mood of the populace. Think how much money would be saved!

Recently, pollsters have found that more teens can name the Three Stooges than the three branches of government, that far more can identify Leonardo DiCaprio than Al Gore, and that 37 percent of the public believe in astrology. Do we really want people who spend their hard-earned money calling the psychic hot line to decide our nation's future?

Voting should not be made easier. As the only sacrament in our public life, ceremony should be involved. I well remember my father taking me to the county clerk's office in August 1976, to vote absentee before I left for college. I met the clerk, filled out the required paperwork, and voted in the room where the local county governing board met each week. The huge room and the solemnity of signing my name and having my signature notarized impressed upon me the gravity of my vote. I had studied the ballot, read about the issues, and took the whole exercise very seriously.

Sadly, this first experience prepared me for a lifetime of being out of sync with the rest of the public—everybody I voted for lost, including the congressional candidate who campaigned as a bachelor until his wife showed up a week before the election.

There are a few sure ways to increase voter turnout: Have a good old-fashioned fight on the school board. Let the assessor increase property values. But absent local acrimony, war, or depression, voter turnout will continue to decline. Voters have decided our national government is too large and too far removed from their daily concerns for their votes to make a difference. I think they're right.

So stay home in November. Ignore the Ad Council. And let me vote in peace.

—Blake Hurst votes in Tarkio, Missouri.

SCAN

THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE MYTH

Today's fanatical advocates of "separation of church and state" insist it poses a mortal danger to America when rabbis or ministers are allowed to pronounce invocations at graduation ceremonies, or when engravings of the Ten Commandments are left on courthouse walls. With a hailstorm of lawsuits they have imposed this view on the nation.

Their hero is Thomas Jefferson, who coined the phrase "a wall of separation between church and State" (in one of his letters; nothing like it appears in the Constitution). So it is interesting to observe what Jefferson himself thought the proper balance was between civil and religious life, as shown in a major exhibit mounted by the Library of Congress, "Religion and the Founding of the American Republic."

The exhibit notes that President Jefferson attended church every Sunday—in the House of Representatives. The Capitol was actually used by several congregations as their sanctuary. So were the Treasury department and the War Office, with Jefferson's blessing. Jefferson also allowed the Marine band to play at these religious services. He even put a clergyman on the government payroll so that he would have the support necessary to continue his ministry. For many years, church services were also held every Sunday in the Supreme Court chamber, with at least one justice always present.

The Library of Congress's curator, James Hutson, writes, "It is no exaggeration to say that, on Sundays in Washington during Thomas Jefferson's presidency, the state became the church." Such practices continued through much of the nineteenth century. Hutson records the delicious irony that on precisely the day—May 13, 1866—when Congress passed the Fourteenth Amendment (its "equal protection" provisions are one of the favorite clubs wielded against public religious expression), the newly organized First Congregational Church of Washington was permitted by the House to use the House chamber for services and Sunday school.

The laws now interpreted as forbidding any acknowledgment of religion in public life meant no such thing to the Founders who wrote them. If we will just demand a little moderation and tolerance from absolutist opponents of worship, religion and public life can once again co-exist in a comfortable, natural way—as they did for the most famous author of America's liberties.

NUTSCAPE

"CyberPatrol," by the Learning Company, is today's most popular Internet filter to block objectionable Web content. It used to block access to homosexual sites, but after protests from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), not only was that policy reversed, but a representative from GLAAD was installed on the company's oversight committee (despite GLAAD's vigorous lobbying against the use of filtering software).

This summer, officials of the American Family Association, active backers of filtering software, were shocked to discover that the newest versions of CyberPatrol block their Internet site. When they inquired why, they were told they were filtered under the "intolerance" category (previously reserved for Nazi and Klan offerings) because their site included religious arguments against homosexual behavior.

Nothing like a little decency, fair play, and technology to fix a social problem.

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By Karl Zinsmeister

Indicators

AMERICAN TOLERANCE

Foreigners living in more ethnically homogeneous nations sometimes cluck at Americans for having a race problem. But as academics Stephan and Abigail Thernstrom note in *America in Black and White*, **Americans are actually quite tolerant compared to residents of other developed nations.**

A major international study conducted in 1991 found that **disdain for minorities is more than twice as high in most European countries** as in the U.S. Some examples:

Percentage of the population with an "unfavorable" view of national minorities

country	minority group	percent disliking
East Germany	Poles	54%
Czechoslovakia	Hungarians	49
West Germany	Turks	45
Russia	Azerbaijanis	44
France	North Africans	42
Poland	Ukrainians	42
Hungary	Romanians	40
Spain	Catalans	22
Great Britain	Irish	21
United States	African Americans	13

Source: Times Mirror Center, *The Pulse of Europe*, 1991.

STOP COUNTING BY RACE?

The Census Bureau has been heavily criticized for insisting that people identify themselves by race when filling out its surveys. Many people of mixed race background are offended at having to choose a crude identifier (see our article on pages 48-52).

A large majority of the public thinks that the best way to stop discriminating by race is to simply stop counting that way. The Census Bureau has rejected that advice, but their decision may be difficult to carry out fully, given growing citizen resistance to government racial categorization:

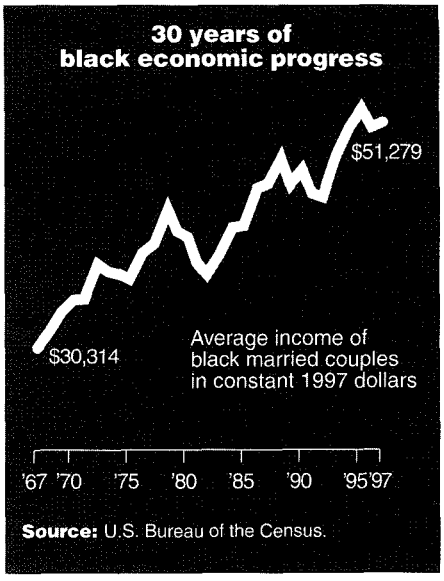
> "Some people say the U.S. Census should no longer ask about a respondent's race because the government should not be considering race if it wants to bring down racial barriers. Others say the Census should continue considering race, otherwise it will make it more difficult for government to target programs by race or ethnic identity. Which is closer to your view?"

Race should no longer be asked in Census	56%
Census should continue to consider race	38
Don't know	6

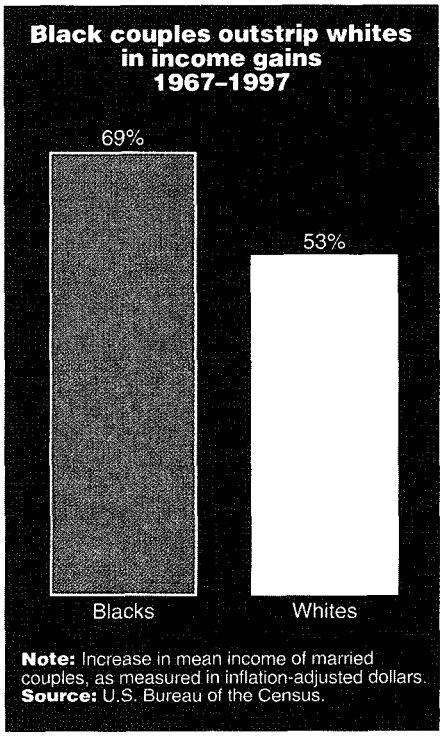
Source: Penn, Schoen & Berland poll for DLC, 1997.

THE SHRINKING INCOME GAP

Black incomes have risen sharply over the last three decades—**much faster than the incomes of comparable whites**, in fact. Blacks still lag behind, in large measure because many more black households than white households are structured in uneconomic ways (for instance, as single-parent families). But **among blacks and whites of the same family status, age, and educational level, we are nearing parity** in earnings today.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.



Note: Increase in mean income of married couples, as measured in inflation-adjusted dollars.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

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RACE AND CRIME

Race is often confused with other things. For instance, many failures of achievement blamed on race today can actually be explained by the miserable quality of the public schools many blacks attend (see page 60).

In a similar way, many of the behaviors and attitudes characterized as "white racism" today are actually adjustments made by fair-minded citizens who are simply afraid of being victimized. When security guards keep black shoppers under observation, when people walking streets avoid black teenagers, when homeowners worry about neighborhood life as minorities move in, the motivation is less often racial animus than a pragmatic fear of crime.

Like it or not, the reality today is that **crime *is* linked to race.** Despite composing less than an eighth of the U.S. population, **African Americans commit more than a third of all serious crimes.** When it comes to matters of personal security **it is often not safe for individual citizens to pretend race doesn't matter.**

A majority of violent crimes committed by blacks involve a white victim. And that practical fact explains much of the defensive behavior (like the retreat from cities) currently practiced by white Americans.

Consider these stark figures:

Interracial crimes

	white offender/ black victim	black offender/ white victim
Rape	100	20,204
Robbery	7,031	167,924
Assault	49,800	431,670
All violent crimes	55,301	572,458

Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1991.

Until these rates change, it's not realistic to expect average people to treat race as irrelevant.

This is not to say that conventional wisdom on the subject of race and crime is always accurate. A recent study by sociologist Robert Lerner showed that on the contentious matter of racial differences in sentencing, the realities are not what many people perceive them to be. **Whites, contrary to popular opinion, are actually *less* likely to be acquitted** (or otherwise let off) after being arrested than blacks are. Conviction rates are lower for blacks than whites in fully 12 of the 14 felony categories tracked by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics.

RACE AND CLASS

In certain consequential areas of behavior, **the "distance" between middle-class life and underclass existence is much less apparent among blacks than it is among other Americans.** This is particularly true in the area of family-making.

Case in point: illegitimacy.

Among high school dropouts of any race, having a birth out of wedlock is not unusual. But among middle-class women with more education, income, and occupational status, illegitimacy tends to be much rarer.

Interestingly, though, the boundary between the middle-class pattern and the lower-class pattern is not nearly so clear among blacks.

As the table below shows, for both whites and Hispanics, illegitimacy drops sharply as women climb the status ladder. **Among white and Hispanic women in managerial/professional careers, illegitimacy is almost non-existent.**

Among African Americans, however, the falloff in illegitimate births as education and income rise is much less sharp.

The startling bottom line: **Black college graduates give birth out of wedlock at about the same rate as white high school dropouts.**

This reflects different outlooks and cultural values. And it *causes* the economic and social fortunes of the different races to diverge sharply.

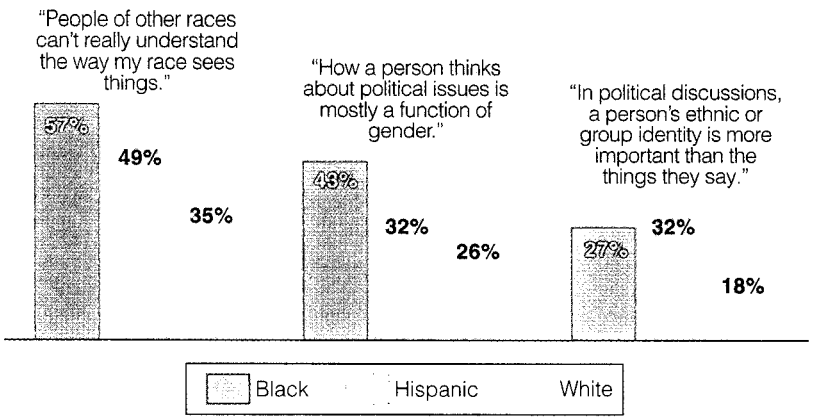
Never-married women aged 40–44 who have had an illegitimate child

	Black	White	Hispanic
High school dropout	84 %	49 %	77 %
Bachelors or Associate degree	44	12	17
Holding a managerial/ professional job	45	3	6*

***Note:** This figure is estimated, due to small sample size.
Source: Editor's calculations from U.S. Bureau of the Census data.

BALKANIZATION TODAY

An interesting survey conducted by University of Virginia researchers a couple years ago found that blacks, and to a lesser degree Hispanics, are much more likely than whites to believe that race and sex determine one's thinking. Here are the results:



Source: *Echoes*, University of Virginia, 1996.

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"Live" with TAE

RICHARD NIXON'S WHITE HOUSE LAWYER COMMENTS ON HIS BOSS, PRESIDENT CLINTON, IMPEACHMENT, WATERGATE, MORALITY, AND POLITICS.

Leonard Garment

Talk of presidential impeachment or resignation is in the air for the first time in 25 years. So TAE *set up a chat with Leonard Garment, the jazz saxophonist turned lawyer who served as Richard Nixon's counsel in 1973-74, as the walls came tumbling down.*

The Brooklyn-born Garment's recent memoir, Crazy Rhythm, *riffs on such disparate topics as jazz music (Garment played with both Woody Herman and Alan Greenspan), psychoanalysis, and, of course, the thirty-seventh President. A liberal Democrat in the 1960s, Garment befriended former Vice President Richard Nixon when he arrived as the new guy at Garment's New York law firm. When Nixon returned to the White House as President, Garment served him in capacities both formal and informal: as White House Counsel and sounding board.*

Leonard Garment, 74, and still dispensing advice, was interviewed at his Washington law office by TAE *associate editors Bill Kauffman and John Meroney.*

Impeachment is the Founders' constitutional version of therapy.

TAE: Nixon once told you, "You're never going to make it in politics, Len. You just don't know how to lie." Was Nixon as good a liar as Clinton is?

GARMENT: No. All politicians do a lot of lying. Everybody lies a little bit; cutting verbal corners is part of civilization. But Nixon had trouble lying. Falsification worked against his face—he would sweat, his upper lip would be covered with perspiration, and he was always a very bad physical witness to his own words.

Imagine Nixon perspiring and hemming and hawing and saying the question is what "is" means. I mean, by the end of the day he would be gone. Clinton's case is really an extraordinary tour de force, or tour de farce, depending upon your ideological point of view.

TAE: Did you eventually become a competent liar?

GARMENT: No, and I'm happy I haven't become a competent liar. But I don't just get up there piously, pompously blurting out the truth all the time. There is a time to speak out, a time for silence, a time for gentle semantic evasion because the world does not have square corners. I'm sure I've said some things that could be classified as lies, but I think they were justified by the situation.

TAE: Was there ever a hint of sexual scandal involving Nixon?

GARMENT: Well, there were some hints but they were ludicrous. There was some theory that before he became President and when he was travelling abroad in Asia he had a lady friend. Now, I happen to know the situation because a senior partner with whom he was travelling, Bob Guthrie, was master of ceremonies at some social gatherings in Tokyo, and there were a lot of invited women—geishas, what have you—and Nixon fled the premises. He just disappeared.

And I remember Bob Guthrie saying, "I don't know what's the matter with that boy, it's just a little fun."

TAE: Was Nixon ever in analysis?

GARMENT: There's some evidence that he did have a therapist: Dr. Arnold Hutschnecker, whom he saw from time to time during the years when he was not in the Presidency. He had a common characteristic of people who have immense anxieties and stress: a lot of visceral trouble.

There were pseudo-ulcers and pseudo-colon problems: the internal and very common chaos that's wrought by stress, by aggressive feelings that have to be mastered and controlled. It was before antidepressants and the whole colony of medications that alleviated these conditions. It might have been quite different if he'd had access to antidepressants. That wouldn't have changed his basic psychological constitution but might have helped him with these internal struggles.

TAE: Would you call him paranoid?

GARMENT: Everybody has paranoid tendencies. Did he have more than the average amount

Illustration by Lucinda S. Levine

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of suspicions? Probably by the time he was President. He was a politician who had stimulated and solicited anger and reciprocated the anger, and that kind of cycle produces suspicions.

I don't think you're so paranoid if you do have enemies.

TAE: Nixon said that had he continued on in his career as a lawyer, he would have been intellectually dead in two years and physically dead in four years. Can you imagine him having any career other than politician?

GARMENT: He wouldn't have died. He had a very strong urge to live, and he would have been a very successful lawyer. On those two occasions when he argued in the Supreme Court he was the master of his brief. Abe Fortas said he would have been one of the finest advocates in the country.

If he hadn't become President, he would have had a very intensely political life. He might have become Secretary of State.

TAE: Do you think Nixon would be fascinated with the Clinton scandal?

GARMENT: Oh my God. He'd say they should have gotten that guy a pair of pants with buttons instead of a zipper. He'd say *[launching into a Nixon imitation]*, "I don't care what he was doing with her but just bear in mind: What do you do if you get caught? You're in real trouble. Kennedy was screwing all over the White House—in the Secretary's office, in the Oval Office, in the swimming pool, in the bedroom, in hotel rooms, wherever. Dozens. Never got caught. The press didn't bother him. He had that charm. It was a different time. But now, the guy was really doing a high-wire act—and the wire was greased. Give them enough to get you, they'll get you. But this time the shoe—or the cigar—is on the other foot."

TAE: The Clintonites seem to be designing censure as a fallback position. Was there ever any discussion of censure in the Nixon Administration?

GARMENT: No. I don't recall any. Censure never made any sense to me. Coming up with solutions that are not written in the Constitution is a bad idea. Everybody gets off the hook. When I hear "We'll have censure" I think, well, why not get him outside and hit him with rubber paddles? Haze him.

TAE: Some of the Clinton subalterns apparently have taken to trying to expose extramarital dalliances of their Republican opponents.

GARMENT: Dalliance. I love that word. It's the age of euphemism. The pictures are bad but the words are really quite pleasant.

Imagine Nixon perspiring and saying the question is what "is" means. By the end of the day he'd be gone. Clinton's lying is an extraordinary tour de force, or tour de farce.

TAE: How much of this was there in the Nixon White House during Watergate—going after Democratic opponents when your back was to the wall?

GARMENT: Back to the wall? We were trying to figure out how to stand up with our backs against the wall instead of falling to the ground.

During that period of time it was head counting. Do we have enough? Can we hold out until election time?

TAE: So did Nixon base his decision to resign simply on head counting or was there a sense that "this was best for the country"?

GARMENT: Basically it was head counting. It was down two, up two, so-and-so defected; we have to pass this piece of legislation because if we don't we're going to lose these people. One of the most amazing things was that the last piece of legislation Nixon signed was the Legal Services Corporation Act—how about that?—when his core support was pleading with him to veto it.

I remember a luncheon meeting. Three or four of us were there—Bill Timmons, Bryce Harlow—and they're saying, "The sooner it ends the better because it's such agony." And I said, "Well, I don't know. Why don't we take it to the Senate?" They were throwing rolls at me: Get out of here!

Support was going, going, gone. I guess part of that was his sense that there is a time to stay and a time to fight; a time to stay and a time to go. It's in the mold of Ecclesiastes.

I think it stirred Nixon's own sense of history, of the country, of his own effort to leave something behind other than scorched earth surrounding the White House. Like 1960, when he lost the presidency by a hair, and had a lot of evidence of illegality in three or four crucial election districts. He had been cheated of his election, and a lot of people advised him to have a recount in Chicago and Texas, in Missouri. But he said no, you can't have the country in a state of suspended animation while there's a legal challenge to the presidency, so the hell with it.

You can say that's good presidential citizenship. It was also his own sense that his political life would end in that kind of recount bitterness.

TAE: In retrospect, do you agree with the House Judiciary Committee that Nixon committed impeachable offenses?

GARMENT: Well, of course. An impeachable offense is what Congress says.

Can they impeach because a President spit on the sidewalk? They would all be carted off to a lunatic asylum. So these things are constrained by political reality. But Nixon wouldn't have re-

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signed if he didn't think there was an impeachable offense, and that what Congress had come up with was sufficient that he had lost the confidence of not only the Congress but of the country. That's an impeachable offense: When a President ceases to be able to govern because so much has been irrefutably produced in the way of evidence and atmosphere. By irrefutable, I mean not necessarily true but it has become accepted, common, conventional, national wisdom.

TAE: Have we reached that point now?

GARMENT: No.

TAE: Do you see us reaching that point?

GARMENT: Don't know. That's the beauty of the whole thing, and that's why impeachment is not a satisfactory process for people who are passionately partisan. Because it does its work through a complicated conversation among the people, local legislators, the media, the Congress, all of that. It goes on gradually and it takes time.

The Founders understood the workings of human beings. Perhaps they didn't call it therapy then but they understood that there are certain civil processes that are designed to help people get well from the illness of wrath and emotional anger and to maintain civil peace. Impeachment is the Founders' version of constitutional therapy. It's a way for people to gradually come to an understanding and then through the Congress act on that understanding.

TAE: Clinton got fawning press the first couple of years, despite the fact that these people knew that he liked to sleep around. What he was doing with Lewinsky was really no different than what he had been doing for years; why *now* does the hammer come down?

GARMENT: Because it was unavoidable. Because there was a strange marriage between a very determined civil suitor named Paula Jones and an independent counsel investigating an entirely different set of matters named Kenneth Starr.

TAE: Who was more immoral, Richard Nixon or Bill Clinton?

GARMENT: I don't believe in moral relativism.

TAE: Were either of them immoral?

GARMENT: The moral Presidents are truly catastrophic in handling the government's business, which is to do difficult things in a dangerous and immoral world: people like Jimmy Carter and Woodrow Wilson and others who would be custodians of national morality.

TAE: Just as there were obsessive Nixon haters, so, too, there are obsessive Clinton haters. What about these two men inspire such loathing?

GARMENT: Well, they are the symbols of the nation.

TAE: But nobody really hated Bush or Carter.

GARMENT: Nixon is a powerful figure of an era: the Nixon Era. Alger Hiss to Vietnam. Clinton is the 1960s writ large.

TAE: Have you ever felt hatred toward a politician?

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GARMENT: I really can't stand politicians with big mouths like Joe Biden. But I'm not a big hater. I have too much fun.

TAE: What was your reaction to the film *Nixon* by Oliver Stone?

GARMENT: There's a man I really dislike, because of a personal thing that I can't go into that happened between him and me. In my first viewing of the film, which I could hardly look at because I disliked him so much, I was disturbed by the intermingling of Stone's own self-hatred, hatred of the country, and hatred of his subject: a real creative hater.

But very good art can come out of hatred, produced by internal violence. I saw the movie again and thought it was pretty good. It wasn't true, but it was interesting.

TAE: What was Nixon's relationship with the arts and artists? Under Nixon, in no small part due to you, the National Endowment for the Arts flourished. Did he have favorite painters, favorite writers?

GARMENT: He had an appreciation of culture, but he was a good politician.

He loved classical music, more of the 19th Century romantic: Beethoven, Tchaikovsky. Richard Rodgers' "Victory at Sea." He was very close to conductor Eugene Ormandy.

Occasionally I'd get a call from his secretary: "The President wants you to go with him to the symphony." We'd get in the car and go, listen and talk a little bit. Pleasant. And he enjoyed it. He'd go on nights when there wasn't anything in particular happening. So it wasn't a black-tie performance.

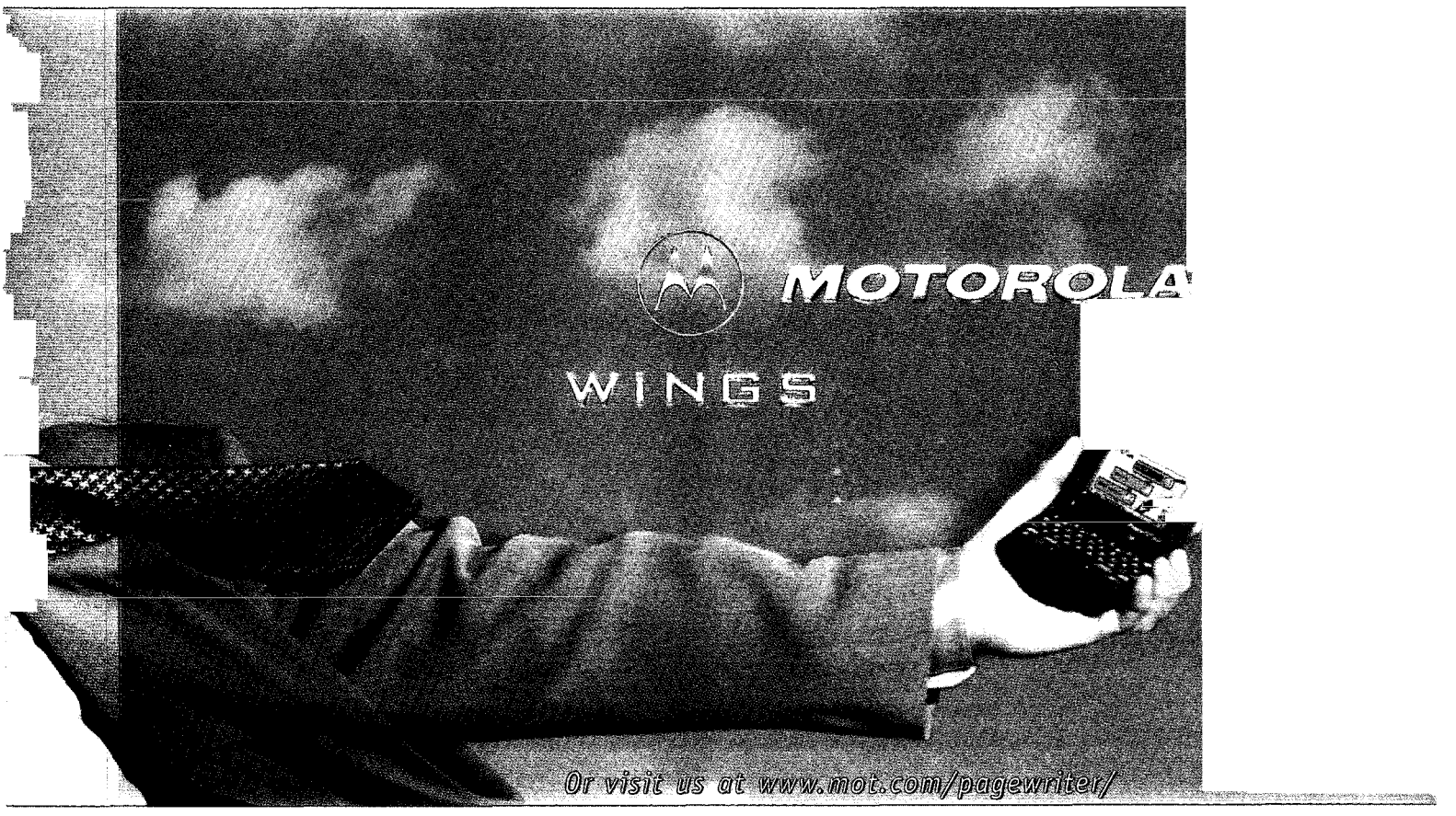
As for the NEA, I knew that Nixon was looking for things that would soften up the homeland a little bit. The central problem was the withdrawal from Vietnam: how to get out slowly without the country coming apart, without having a political revolution.

So I said the NEA is a good thing: it's good on the merits, it's good politically—hit 'em where they ain't. Just as hypocrisy is the price that virtue pays to vice, the NEA was the price we paid to liberals in order to get them to calm down a little bit.

TAE: Do you have a certain sympathy for Clinton as a fellow saxophonist?

GARMENT: I appreciate the fact that he does like jazz. I went to the Lionel Hampton party at the White House, and Clinton played the saxophone. He played "My Funny Valentine."

The sound was okay. He had the tune okay. The problem he had was swing. There's an Old Duke Ellington song, "It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got that Swing," and I was startled because Hampton's brilliant rhythm section managed to stay with [Clinton's] six beats to a bar—which is not the way you swing. So maybe that's his fundamental problem: that he doesn't swing.



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The Greatest Story Never Told

Everyday America's Racial Harmony

By Deroy Murdock

It's August 2 in New York's Central Park as radical black poet Amiri Baraka reads a poem to musical accompaniment. "Suppose you was so out, your murder was not a crime," says Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones). "Suppose you are the usual suspect in any crime, even those committed against you?" Baraka then recites a string of racial epithets: "Shine, Woogie, Rug head, Spear chucker, coon, jigaboo...." ■ In the back of the Summer Stage audience, a young white guy in a blue T-shirt strokes his chin and looks puzzled. And why not? Baraka heaps his avalanche of black victimology upon a friendly, well-integrated crowd of white, black, Hispanic, and Asian spectators. They cheerfully sway on a sun-splashed Sunday to the sounds of black American and African musicians. A blond woman dances with abandon behind a black baby's stroller.

The congregation at the Greater New Bethel Baptist Church, joins hands during a prayer vigil for James Byrd, Jr. Wednesday, June 10, 1998 in Jasper, Texas. (AP Photo/Pat Sullivan)

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AP Photo/David J. Ph p

Residents of Jasper, TX—a town many journalists dismissed as a bigoted backwater—united after their tragedy.

The sunshine bounces off the gray chest hairs that upholster an older white man twirling beside several black patrons. Beneath a shady tree, a white woman laughs and chats in French with a half-dozen young African men as dark as the night is long. They seem to be old friends. Against these scenes of racial tranquillity, Baraka is on stage yelling: "liver lips, sambo, boy, Burr head, property, darkie, ink spot...."

His words sound oddly alien to a country that quietly has eased racial tensions. While left-wing activists like the Reverends Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton complain constantly about what they consider the white man's never-ending war against minorities, Americans of different ethnic backgrounds actually are making peace with each other. They're demonstrating quite clearly that, to paraphrase Rodney King, we all *can* just get along.

But don't tell that to America's so-called "black leaders." They see a bigot under every bed. "Everywhere we see clear racial fault lines, which divide American society as much now as at anytime in our past," NAACP chairman Julian Bond declared last May 27.

"Hardly an aspect of American life has escaped the baneful touch of this awful thing called racism," said historian John Hope Franklin, chairman of President Clinton's advisory board on race, in July 1997. "Wherever you go, you are going to see this."

"We are the victims of racism in this society," Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) announced in June 1997.

Jim Sleeper, author of *Liberal Racism*, believes "there is a race industry that has a moral and financial stake in ginning up these racial bogeymen." As he says by phone: "There is a real effort to play up the bad news and play down the good.... The ground is shifting under our feet, and a lot of these people don't want to let go."

Neither Sleeper nor anyone else argues that bigotry is extinct. Those who think so need only consider the case of James Byrd, Jr. Words as ugly as those hurled by Amiri Baraka may have been the last things Byrd heard on June 7, when three white ex-convicts picked up the disabled 49-year-old black man as he hitchhiked. In an horrific crime that shocked and outraged Americans, they chained him to their pickup truck and dragged him to death by the ankles.

But this atrocity overshadowed the racial harmony that the people of Jasper, Texas, previously enjoyed, and soon worked diligently to restore. The town that many journalists dismissed as a bigoted backwater united after this tragedy. Jasper's black mayor, R. C. Horn, and both black and white ministers led Jasper's 8,000 citizens in interracial rallies and joint prayer vigils. With love and respect, they convened to protest the human tragedy that had befallen their neighbor. After one service, the mixed crowd hugged and sang "We Shall Overcome."

In a half-hearted attempt at healing, even a few members of the Ku Klux Klan showed up to "denounce what has happened." They explained that there were some things even *they* could not applaud. Hate without homicide seems like progress, of a sort. When the New Black Panther Party arrived to protest the June 27 Klan demonstration, most Jasper residents avoided both groups, and asked outsiders to leave them in peace.

Jasper's racial reconciliation mirrors that which occurred when the media diagnosed an epidemic of supposedly anti-black church fires that turned out to be far less incendiary. As journalist Michael Fumento explains, only three of over 70 church fires investigated by *USA Today* and the Department of Justice could be tied to racial animosity. The federal Church Arson Task Force likewise uncovered few racial links. Several burned black churches were struck by lightning. Others were torched for insurance money. Young vandals set still more ablaze. Many were burned by copy-cat arsonists fueled, ironically, by media condemnation of previous fires. One-third of those arrested were black.

Well before the "racist arson" theory was debunked, white churchgoers embraced the black faithful. The Christian Coalition established a $1 million Save the Churches Fund to help rebuild black houses of worship. Ralph Reed, the Christian Coalition's then-executive director, met with black ministers in June 1996. "We come not trying to preach to others," he said, but to learn from those who struggled "for racial justice, a cause which in the past the white evangelical church failed to embrace, to its great shame." What began as a wave of reputedly anti-black arson became a cause for bridge building between blacks and whites.

The January 16, 1997 death of Ennis Cosby—son of comedian Bill Cosby and his wife Camille—has been portrayed as a brutal bias crime that was inevitable in this hopelessly racist society. "I believe America taught our son's killer to hate African Americans," Mrs. Cosby wrote in *USA Today*. "Racism and prejudice are omnipresent and eternalized in America's institutions, media, and myriad entities."

Ennis Cosby's murder, however, looks like little more than a simple, vicious street crime, perpetrated by a Ukranian immigrant named Mikail Markhasev. While perhaps not an ethnic Eden, today's America mostly teaches tolerance to arrivals from other countries. Why did 40 percent of U.S. respondents recently

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select Bill Cosby as "the nation's top dad" if these really are the United States of Racism? Why does a racist Amerikkka buy Bill Cosby's hugely successful books, watch his TV shows, and buy the Jell-O Pudding Pops he endorses? Beyond the national outpouring of grief at her son's senseless death, Mrs. Cosby overlooks stark material proof of America's affection for her husband: a decades-long stream of big money. In 1997 alone, *Forbes* reports Cosby earned $18 million. This demonstrated public fondness underscores the folly of Camille Cosby's theory of innate American bigotry—unless one believes that people give money, by the vault-full, to those they hate.

For that matter, would white bigots vote for blacks? Whites increasingly choose blacks to represent them in office. New York State Comptroller Carl McCall, Ohio State Treasurer Kenneth Blackwell, Colorado Secretary of State Vikki Buckley, U.S. Senator Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois, and former Virginia Governor Douglas Wilder are examples of black Democrats and Republicans favored by heavily white electorates.

Despite these concrete achievements, some black politicians still see racially gerrymandered districts as the only way to secure electoral victories for blacks. In December 1995, the NAACP's Theodore Shaw predicted that, thanks to Supreme Court decisions against using race as the primary factor in reapportionment, "the Congressional Black Caucus will be able to meet in the back seat of a taxicab." Deval Patrick, then-Assistant U.S. Attorney for Civil Rights, foresaw "a return to the days of all-white government." The Reverend Jesse Jackson feared "a kind of ethnic cleansing." But despite such overwrought rhetoric, all 35 black incumbent Members of Congress on the ballot in November 1996 were reelected save one, Representative Gary Franks (R-Conn.), who lost to an opponent who called him an aloof slumlord. Franks' defeat was offset by Indianapolis Democrat Julia Carson, who won 53 percent of the vote in a 69 percent white district.

Representative Cynthia McKinney (D-Ga.) fretted that she would lose her seat after the Supreme Court found the racially rigged Fourth Congressional District unconstitutional in June 1995. Yet she managed to beat John Mitnick, a moderate Republican who happens to be Jewish, in a new, majority-white district said to be populated by the highest number of Jewish voters in the South. Final score: McKinney 58 percent, Mitnick 42.

Even the Monica Lewinsky scandal, of all things, offers lessons on improved race relations and black advancement. As writer Evan Gahr observes, when Zippergate first ensnared Americas white, Southern president, who did he call for help but Vernon Jordan, the black super-lawyer and Beltway fixer. Monica's close friend in the West Wing theoretically was Betty Currie, the well-regarded personal secretary to the President of the United States. Larry Cockell—the black man who guards President Clinton as head of the Secret Service's personal protective detail—testified in this case. But before that, federal Judge Norma Holloway Johnson, also black, led the parade of jurists who ruled that Cockell and other agents must testify. Team Lewinsky also includes her publicist, Judy Smith, and attorney Billy Martin, both black.

The involvement of these professionals in this high-profile case exemplifies both black success and the everyday black-white cooperation that now exists despite the incessant rhetoric about bigoted bogeymen. If America must endure a sex-and-lies fiasco, it might as well be an integrated one.

Corroborating evidence of America's growing racial amity can be found in the dramatic decrease in anti-Semitism. The Anti-Defamation League reported an 8.8 percent drop in anti-Semitic vandalism and other crimes last year. As Irving Kristol has remarked: "the danger facing American Jews today is not that Christians want to persecute them, but that Christians want to marry them." According to the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, 52 percent of American Jews intermarry with Gentiles.

Intermarriage exists among many groups. The 1990 Census found 1.4 million interracial married couples in America. In 1970, 0.7 percent of black women married white men; by 1993, that number had increased more than five-fold to 3.9 percent. Among black men in 1970, 1.9 percent married white women. That figure more than quadrupled to 8.9 percent in 1993.

The numbers are even higher among other ethnicities. As John J. Miller reports in his book, *The Unmaking of Americans*, in 1990, 28 percent of all marriages involving someone of Mexican ancestry also included a non-Hispanic. Half of Americans of Japanese descent marry people without Japanese roots. Miller observes that intermarriage among whites once was noteworthy. "When an Irish American married an Italian American 75 years ago," he writes, "it was probably a big deal in the neighborhood. But no more. In the future, everyone will have a Korean grandmother."

Of course, interracial couples most profoundly blur America's ethnic lines by having mixed children. The 1990 Census discovered 2 million minors who were "of a different race than one or both of their parents." This trend has grown so widespread that some multi-racial couples demanded a "mixed race" box on the 2000 Census form. After much deliberation, the Census Bureau instead decided to allow Americans to describe themselves by filling as many racial-category boxes as they wish.

Couples who adopt also find that race lines are drawn in chalk rather than ink, if at all. Despite the National Association of Black Social Workers' claim that trans-racial adoption is "cultural genocide," Congress easily passed the Multiethnic Placement Act in 1994. It prohibits racial discrimination in adoption, and blocks federal funds to social-service agencies that prevent interracial adoption. This measure was strengthened in 1996.

Last June, I accompanied a group of college students to the Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta. These white youths and I, a 34-year-old black man, were equally startled by the surreal Jim Crow laws on display at the Center. One ordinance required all circuses visiting Louisiana to maintain separate entrances for white and black spectators. Another demanded separate buildings for black and white residents at an institution for the blind.

That world might as well be Mars. Americans may never be as truly colorblind as the occupants of that home for the sightless, but in U.S. churches, TV studios, voting booths, and even bedrooms, one thing is becoming clear: The land where individuals would "not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character"—as Dr. King put it— seems every day more a reality than a 35-year-old dream.

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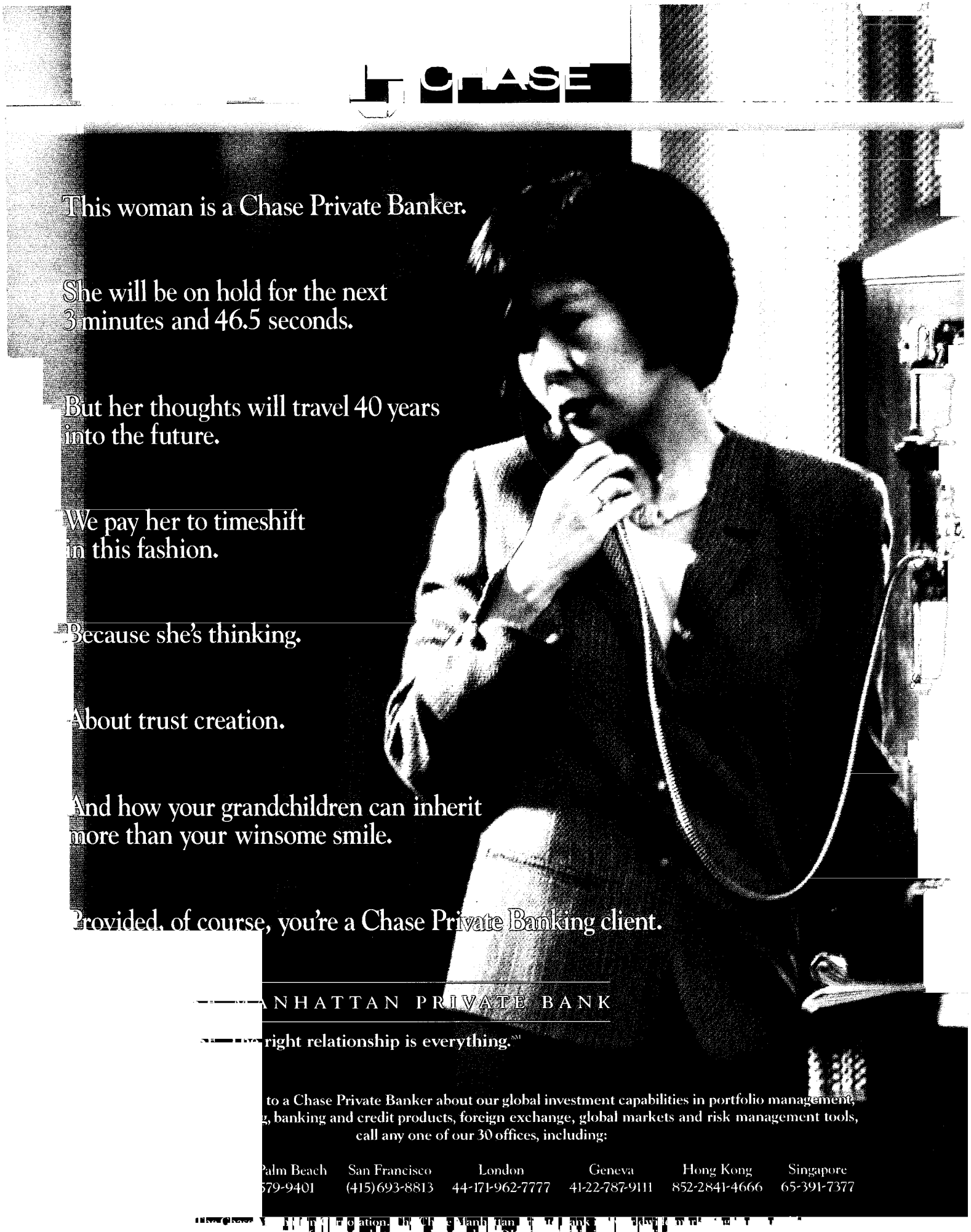
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Why is America's Black Middle Class

Strangely Fragile?

By Richard Miniter

Today's black professional is sometimes an invisible man. Even the President's national initiative on race has focused obsessively on the poor and unsuccessful, and ignored the burgeoning black middle class. Partly because they are prosperous, partly because their lives don't readily supply the props necessary to stage a debate about the role of government, the press and pundits don't see black professionals. Confounding both liberal and conservative clichés about economic progress as they do—while also pointing to some vital unfinished racial business—the members of the black middle class are worth a closer look.

Black professionals defy easy categorization. Many are like Lorna Holt, an independent television producer who lives in San Francisco with her husband, Eric, who is white and teaches in an inner-city Oakland high school. She understands discrimination firsthand, though not the kind usually cited by liberals.

From her first day in kindergarten, Lorna knew she was different from the other students at Sixth Avenue Elementary School in south-central Los Angeles. She spoke both Spanish and English with ease, like an Hispanic student. But her light black skin and kinky hair seemed to place her with the African Americans. Her high grades and good behavior only brought her abuse from all sides. "Tryin' to act white?" her classmates would taunt. "Oreo!" "Teacher's pet!" She would hear those insults, over and over, for the next 12 years. Her only close friends were Asian immigrants.

Ralph Butler

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Lorna's parents were immigrants, too. They came from Costa Rica in 1962. Her father was a systems analyst for Kaiser Permanente, and her mother had taught herself English well enough to become an English teacher in the L.A. public schools. Lorna was taught that hard work and good grades were the path to success in America. Meanwhile her classmates thought success was a matter of luck or trickery. Every black professional interviewed for this article tells a similar childhood story; good grades only fueled animosity, they say.

Holt's life is a string of achievements in the classroom and office, made possible by self-discipline and effort, and capped by economic independence. She never felt seriously limited by the color of her skin.

Much of the black middle class, like its white counterparts, lives in the suburbs. Liberals find that hard to understand; they still think of chocolate cities surrounded by vanilla suburbs. That's why Loston Harris, one of the hottest new jazz stars under 30, really confuses them. He doesn't apologize for liking suburbs like his home town of Reston, Virginia. He doesn't think black authenticity means identifying with the inner-city experience. He's upbeat, not angry. He explains his success in terms of hard work and drive, not in terms of overcoming racial barriers. "If I had to sit at home and wait by the phone, I'd still be home. You gotta be out there," he told a perplexed *Washington Post* reporter.

"For blacks in America, these are the worst of times and the best of times," concludes George Fraser, author of *Race for Success: The Ten Best Business Opportunities for Blacks in America*. This is especially true for middle-class blacks, says Fraser, who was reached in the quiet of his suburban Cleveland home.

"The worst of times" is not an overstatement. Nearly 24 percent of black families live below the poverty line, and the social life of inner cities is often appalling. "We know that the root cause of much of our poverty is the alienation of black males from the work force," says Fraser.

More than 40 percent of black men between 20-29 are either in prison or on parole. And these aren't all the products of lone-parent, low-income homes. Several government researchers contend that the sheer size of the black criminal population suggests that many come from middle-class households. A series of interviews with black professionals across the country, many of whom say they have had relatives behind bars, provides anecdotal evidence that even many middle-class black families have personal brushes with the law.

Illegitimacy is another pathology that, while concentrated in the underclasses, also spills into the black middle class, damping security and life prospects. An eye-popping 45 percent of black women managers or professionals have had an illegitimate child, compared to 3 percent of managerial or professional whites. (See INDICATORS, p. 19.) Small wonder that blacks aged 18-30 place single-parent families at the top of their list of the most important problems facing the nation, according to a recent survey by Public Agenda, a liberal interest group.

There is also good news. The black middle class has grown dramatically in size and wealth in recent years. Black buying power surged from $300 billion in 1990 to more than $500 billion today. The rapidly growing ranks of black managers, supervisors, technicians, and business owners represent "an army of potential role models and mentors to help those stuck in the cycle of poverty," suggests Fraser.

The number of black-owned enterprises nearly doubled over the last decade—five times the rate of new business creation for the country as a whole. There are more black millionaires than ever before, including *Fortune* 500 executives like Kenneth Chenault (president and CEO of American Express) and E. Stanley O'Neal (chief financial officer of Merrill Lynch), as well as entrepreneurs like R. Donahue Peebles, chief executive of the nation's largest black-owned hotel and real estate development company. More than any other single business leader, Peebles may be responsible for resurrecting Miami's core business area.

While growing fast in economic clout, middle-class blacks continue to be nipped by some of the same problems that dog poor blacks.

Putting together the good news with the bad, a complex picture of middle-class blacks emerges. While growing very fast in economic clout, they continue to be nipped by some of the same problems that dog poor blacks. Why does being "middle class" not mean the same thing for blacks as for similarly salaried whites? The answer is part economics, part family experience.

In an important sense, blacks only have one foot in the middle class. They have professional and management jobs that generate solidly middle class incomes. But, for a confluence of reasons, they typically have fewer assets (savings, stocks, bonds, real estate, businesses) than whites with the same income.

Call it the investment gap. Nearly two-thirds of black households have zero savings or more debt than savings. At every income level, blacks save and invest less than whites do. And, at every income level, blacks have a smaller net worth, on average, than whites. Fifty-seven percent of black households with annual incomes greater than $50,000 invest in the stock market, compared to 81 percent of whites in the same income bracket, according to a 1998 Yankelovich Partners survey.

Historically, black family assets were limited to their homes and cars, says J. Eugene Grigsby of UCLA. This is partly because until the late-1970s, middle-class blacks tended to work for the state or federal governments, which until recently did

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not offer investment plans. As the number of blacks working in the private sector grew, so did the number of blacks interested in investing.

Even high-income blacks save less of their income than whites. Blacks whose annual incomes top $50,000 say that they invest a median of $267 per month in retirement and other savings accounts, according to the Yankelovich study. Meanwhile, whites earning $50,000 or more say that they invest a median amount of $477 per month.

Since they are newer to the ranks of the middle class, many blacks had little family exposure to even basic financial tools—a fact which often emerges in interviews with black professionals. Only 37 percent of blacks now earning more than $50,000 report that their family had a checking account while they were growing up, compared to 52 percent of similarly situated whites.

"Many of us have been laboring under the false comfort that the expansion of the black middle class and the creation of individual black millionaires have moved African Americans closer to parity [with whites]. The reality is, no matter how great incomes become for individual blacks, our wealth is not sustained because we have very few assets that can be passed on," said National Urban League president Hugh Price in a recent keynote address. Without assets, each generation has to

Shrinking From Success

By John McWhorter

LIKE MOST SUCCESSFUL AFRICAN AMERICANS, I have relatives much less fortunate than me. I've seen many of their lives follow well-known pathways to failure. Moreover, I've seen at close hand how echoes of underclass pathologies often reverberate through middle-class black families. It isn't only African-American children from the foulest inner cities who are failing disproportionately in U.S. schools. Much of the failure is among black children from healthier circumstances.

This problem is a manifestation of a phenomenon impossible to parse with statistics or frame in a formal study but pervasive all the same. It is well known among all educators, although rarely discussed at length in public because of how easily the "racist" charge is leveled in our culture today. It can be described as a less fundamental orientation toward education among many African-American students than among typical white, Asian, or other schoolchildren. Most importantly, it manifests itself in all socioeconomic strata, not just among inner-city children.

I have observed this phenomenon at work throughout my life. Growing up in Philadelphia in the 1970s, I was fortunate enough to attend through sixth grade a private Montessori school; there were generally about eight of us black students in a class of about 25. The quality of education was excellent, the teachers attentive and gentle, the neighborhood middle class and quiet. Yet in about the fifth grade a group of the black students became "problem students" inattentive to schoolwork. These students were by no means products of the inner city—their parents worked, many came from two-parent families, and they were well fed and clothed. They received careful, individual attention from the teachers—one of the teachers was even the mother of one of these students. Yet one could see that these kids had tuned out, that they had a basic sense that school was not for them.

The coalescence of this group was part of a peaceful but distinct division of the class along ethnic lines that occurred that year, and some of the other black students in the class gradually allied themselves with them. Soon, their grades began falling too.

From middle school on, I attended another private school where there were usually about ten black students in a class of about 65, many of whom had attended the school since kindergarten. At the ninth grade, there was a significant increase in the amount and caliber of homework expected: Longer papers, more reading, more advanced math. When we returned for tenth grade, four of the black students were gone, having chosen to attend neighborhood public schools instead. These students were all from middle-class backgrounds and had been steeped for years in the best education Philadelphia had to offer. Yet all four had gradually developed a dismissive attitude toward schoolwork. In addition, two of the black students who stayed through graduation became pregnant shortly thereafter and did not go on to college right away, while almost all of the white students did.

This phenomenon is visible through college and beyond. I'll never forget the time a fellow black graduate student told me that my dedication in a presentation about a non-black subject made her wonder whether I was "a brother" or not. A white teaching assistant in engineering once reluctantly told me while I was in graduate school that he couldn't help noticing that there was a tendency for the black undergraduates in his classes to simply not try as hard as the white and Asian students, and to just give up after a certain point. As a professor myself now, I have had to reluctantly acknowledge a similar tendency among black students.

I see the attitudes of these students as symptomatic of a general phenomenon difficult to escape. These students are not stupid or willfully lazy—they are simply victims of a fundamental association of school with an "other" culture sensed as oppressive. There are plenty of exceptions, and some students fall under the sway of this attitude more than others, but the tendency is unmistakable. This tells on even black students with the exact same opportunities as white ones.

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start anew, Price adds. This is how the investment gap keeps many blacks poor.

Moreover, people with high incomes but low net worths don't behave the same way that high net worth people do. The self-discipline needed to acquire assets over time usually transforms the property owner into a stabler person oriented to the long term. A classic example: Home ownership makes one think about the long-term value of a neighborhood.

Properly understood, the black middle class is only partly middle class. Their relative lack of asset accumulation explains why they often feel so insecure about their financial futures—they have little to fall back on if a job disappears. The American middle-class sensibility stresses a certain patient gradualism, a moral stance in favor of the future over the present. It works against all forms of instant gratification, as Harvard professor Edwin Banfield argued in his book *The Unheavenly City Revisited*. Without assets, economic patience, and a preference for future over current gain, the middle-class sensibility is less deeply rooted.

With this in mind, the family experiences of black professionals become important. Stable two-parent families (even if divorced and remarried) are the hallmark of middle-class America. The family experiences of a number of black professionals from across the country indicate that the racial chal-

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The sentiment runs wide and deep. In Atlanta in the 1940s, my mother was conclusively ostracized by neighborhood children for being a "walking encyclopedia." One of my earliest memories 25 years later in Philadelphia is black children asking me to spell a word and jeering at gleeful length when I did so—I quickly learned that to be accepted by the black kids in the neighborhood one did not spell in public. This was Mount Airy, famous as one of America's first integrated neighborhoods, and it is important that I never had any such encounters with the white children, nor did they play such a game with any white child.

We later moved to an all-black middle-class neighborhood in New Jersey. By then, I knew that books were something one only did behind closed doors with a flashlight. But, it was a neighborhood sport in this new community to ask a friend of mine how high a building was, or how many miles Florida was from New Jersey, hear him give the answer, and then derisively roar in laughter, throwing insults, popping him on the back of his head, and calling others to come join the fun. And these kids lived in big, expensive houses on clean, wide streets in a new suburban development.

This friend who was teased for liking books retreated into social isolation. His brother, in response to similar pressures, became a virtual poster boy at 13 for the "resistance to standard English" idea, quite abruptly adopting a colorful black English, when he had used virtually none before. This dialectal transformation was part of a general rejection of whites; he became the most stridently "black-identified" of our group.

Many African Americans who liked school have tales similar to these to tell, and we can be sure that a bookish black kid is suffering ill treatment at this very moment. Of course, black communities are hardly the only ones where it is uncool among children to be smart and like school. There is, however, a particularly pointed, hostile tenor to this in black communities. The kids I am describing didn't think good students were merely weird. They considered them arrant jackasses, sleeping with the enemy, deserving of the sharpest rage and condemnation. The element of rage, rather than simply dismissal, stems from a sentiment that one is kowtowing not just to a culture that is different, but ultimately better. Most African Americans have pride in their culture, and hardly consider white America paradise. But this self-esteem coexists with an underlying suspicion that white people, with their money and cars and universities, are inherently cut of better cloth. Among middle-class blacks, this attitude manifests itself in a tendency Shelby Steele has identified as a reluctance to strive wholeheartedly for the top for fear of failing and proving racism correct. This internalized oppression is an albatross on the African-American soul, and civil rights victories could only begin to change it. It will only disappear when there is true socioeconomic equality between whites and blacks, and in our lifetimes this is inconceivable. In the meantime, this means that black children who ally themselves with books and learning are seen not only as odd, but as implying that they are *better*. Unsurprisingly, many black children choose not to risk such a position.

Thus it doesn't take being born to a crack-addicted mother to fall behind in school despite all assistance. The typical white student brings to school a fundamental assumption that fulfilling the requirements of an education is an inextricable part of being a legitimate member of society. They may not be class-A students, they may not love books, they may have some disciplinary problems—but, fundamentally, school is a basic life pathway, and getting expelled or dropping out is an embarrassment and totem of failure. This is not the frame of mind many African-American students bring to the classroom. Even for many of the fortunate ones, commitment to school is continually leavened by a sense that it is the province of a mainstream to which they do not belong.

John McWhorter teaches linguistics at the University of California at Berkeley. This is adapted from his new book The Word on the Street.

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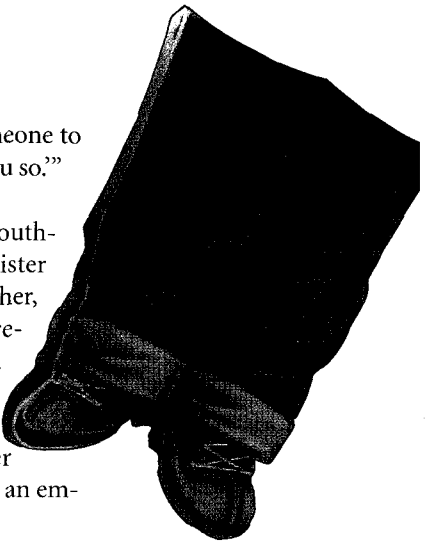
lenge of the coming century may be reconstruction of the black family into a more reliable shelter from life's storms.

Michael Hughes grew up in the Virgin Islands with his maternal grandmother in what he calls the "family orphanage." His mother lived in Harlem, New York, and his father lived on another Virgin Island. Children kept arriving as marriages and other assignations dissolved. "One day we heard that my aunt went crazy, and my two cousins moved in," he says.

Every Sunday, grandmother insisted on turning the television off and enlisting the children in a spelling bee or some other game for candy. She pushed the children to study and rewarded them for it.



The number of black-owned enterprises nearly doubled over the last decade—five times the rate of new business creation for the country as a whole.

At age 17, Michael moved to America. There he lived what he calls an "upper-middle-class life" in Harlem. "I was so afraid of black people because of what I saw on television. Even at age four, after spending a few weeks in Harlem, I made a promise to myself never, ever to be poor." He is now a successful producer, choreographer, and actor in Hollywood.

Interestingly, his mother didn't want to move into a better neighborhood even though she could easily afford it. She didn't know if family finances would always continue to grow, illustrating a distrust of the financial future which crops up frequently in discussions with black professionals. She also wanted her children to feel "normal," and felt they would fit in better in a black neighborhood than in a wealthier, mixed-race neighborhood.

Michael had just the opposite reaction: "I felt like an outcast." Growing up, he worked hard to get rid of his dialect and to be accepted. But it didn't work. "I don't ever want to go back to Harlem. But people tell me 'don't forget where you come from.' I hear it all the time." He continues, "The toughest thing for upper-middle-class blacks is you feel you need to do something completely outstanding to get the respect—instead of the envy—of other blacks."

At 18, Michael's mother said simply: "If you want to go to college, you have to pay for it yourself." It was going to be hard, but he remembered what his grandmother said: "If you want to go do something, you can do it." He worked his way through New York's Adelphi University, where he graduated with a degree in psychiatry.

Today, his brother is an international trade executive, and his sister, at age 24, is a manager in an art gallery. She got pregnant as a junior in high school, but once she had the child she seemed to become more motivated. Her high school grades climbed from *C*s to *A*s.

His family didn't invest in stocks. "My upbringing was you shouldn't play in what's not yours." Why? He pauses. "We never took the time to investigate the market. What we are doing works for us. If it works, don't mess with it," he says. "I don't even like credit cards. I'm old fashioned." He is also afraid of making a mistake. "You never want someone to wave a finger and say 'I told you so.'"

Kevin Pritchett grew up in southern Virginia. He and his sister were raised mostly by his mother, sometimes on welfare. She remarried when he was eight. The family moved a lot.

Kevin often faced "peer pressure from other blacks against success, against an emphasis on learning, against being the best you can be." He felt ostracized. "No one in my family had ever gone to college. I consider myself very lucky," he explains. He is a success by any measure. He graduated from Dartmouth College, worked as an editor at the *Wall Street Journal*, and served as a top aide to Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. Now he is enrolled at the University of Southern California's business school.

Pritchett's sister is unmarried with three children and generally out of work. "Peers played a very important role. She has different priorities," he says. Many of the black professionals I interviewed told similar stories of less successful relatives, whose nearby example often feeds a feeling of insecurity. "I do look at my sister and talk to her. I realize I could've taken her path," he says. "I saw talented young black people who didn't think they could change, and they ended up in very unfortunate circumstances."

Despite his success, Pritchett worries his success might be temporary—a view echoed by many of his peers. "My position in the middle class is a standing-room-only ticket. You're admitted, you may get a seat."

Pritchett invests in the stock market and attributes the lack of previous investment to "family tradition. A lot of whites owned stock or property, and possessed a knowledge base passed down from generation to generation. I think the learning process has to take hold before a lot of blacks invest in the stock market."

In his business school, only 30 percent of the black students say they want to start their own firms someday, compared to 50 percent of whites. Even though the number of black entrepreneurs is growing at a rapid rate, it began from a low base. While one of every 10 Korean-Americans is a business owner, along with one out of every 15 non-Hispanic whites, only one out of every 76 blacks owns his own enterprise.

Reggie Watson (not his real name) grew up in an upper-middle-class black Catholic family in Washington, D.C. He was the only black on his Catholic high school basketball team, which played mostly all-black teams. The black players would call him

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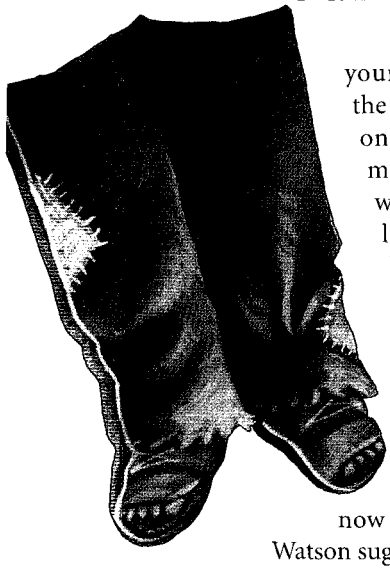
an "Uncle Tom," and the black fans were harsher. At the mall or on the Metro, other blacks made fun of his school uniform (khakis, navy blazer, striped tie). And they really hated him for playing tennis.

He lived in a mostly black neighborhood that had its share of crime. "I witnessed a couple of neighbor kids arrested for armed robbery. In that family, the youngest kid was always in trouble," he says.

Watson never talks about blacks falling down the economic ladder. He suggests the great fear for middle-class blacks is not economic hardship, but being identified with the lower class. "The only time you felt precarious about your middle-class status was with the police. They didn't see my class, only my color," Watson says. This may be why black professionals worry more about things like police racism than direct threats like crime or tax rates—the main worries of their white neighbors. "In my family, everybody was always well provided for. My parents were always more concerned about us not living up to our potential," says Watson, who is now a successful manager.



Watson suggests that many black professionals are not anxious to stand out. "Clarence Thomas is an example that blacks shouldn't let their views be known if they aren't in line with the status quo. The black political establishment is so dogmatic. It'll denigrate anybody who is outside the box. And the press plays into it." Nor are they anxious to stand out with whites. "We aren't judged as individuals, we are judged as a race. When a black rapist is convicted, everyone turns their head at me a little longer," he explains.

"I had no idea that we were poor" growing up, says Ed Brown. A 40-year-old former ABC television executive, Brown is now a business consultant living with his wife outside of Denver. "As I look back now, it was very tough to concentrate on school. I was encouraged not to succeed. Encouraged to skip school and not study. The smart students were given a very difficult time. Boys in high school were encouraged to play sports, not get straight *A*s."

"I had one older sister who unfortunately took the wrong road and took drugs and alcohol. She died early of an overdose. She hooked up with the wrong guy, chose the wrong path. The fortunate thing is that she helped teach me by her mistakes, so I wouldn't make the same ones," Brown says.

"My younger brother also did a lot of drugs and alcohol, and is now in jail for murder. But I have another brother who took the same road as me. He is now a very successful entrepreneur running a paralegal business," he says. "My family, unfortunately, thinks a lot of my success comes from my being married to a white person. My family doesn't acknowledge my hard work."

Using a controversial distinction popularized in the black community by comedian Chris Rock, Brown says, "There are two types of black people in this world: There are niggers and black people. Niggers are completely terrified of education and change. They never want to change. No matter how much my brother and I wanted to help the niggers in my family, they never changed. No matter how much money we gave them, they never changed. They have very low self-esteem. My brother lived with me for two years, but he never wanted to change. Now he's in jail for murder."

Brown made a point of teaching himself to save and invest. "I invest a lot. But no one else in my family does. Lack of understanding. Lack of knowledge of how to play the game."

Many black professionals we interviewed told stories of less successful relatives, whose example feeds a feeling of insecurity.

A pattern emerges. East Coast, West Coast, urban, suburban, immigrant or native, middle-class or poor family during childhood, many black professionals tell a strikingly similar story: They had to overcome negative pressures in order to excel in school; they had no family tradition of saving or investing; they feel a persistent insecurity about their future; they have families where success is distributed very unevenly; and they fear that if they stand out too much they will get pounded down. Nonetheless, America's dynamism has allowed them to make strong successes of themselves.

No government program, from the left or the right, can remedy these problems. It is up to individual families, churches, and the myriad institutions of civil society to step up and begin to reverse negative social forces. Educational excellence must be praised, not ridiculed. The successful should teach the struggling about the importance of long-term thinking and investing. The paramount importance of family loyalty has to be emphasized.

That may seem like a collection of unglamorous tasks. But these are the necessary next steps if today's striking expansion of the black middle class is to be translated into permanent and heartfelt gains.

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African immigrants illustrate some of the many variants of "blackness" in America today

We Want to Depend on Ourselves

By Eli Lehrer

On a windy February day a small girl sporting pig-tails puts aside an algebra textbook to tell a visitor how she feels about being taken to a meeting of the Milenovisi Habobo—or as most call it, the Ewe Association of Chicago. "I don't get it why my mom drags me to these things," she says. "I want her to leave me at home. But she won't. 'We have to remember what it was like in Africa, even if we're Americans now,' she tells us."

These gatherings of Chicago's Ewe (pronounced EH-vay) take place on the third Sunday of each month in a windowless room of the Drexel Street YMCA. The site is aptly located between the green lawns and stone buildings of the University of Chicago and the quiet desperation of a black neighborhood that burned after Martin Luther King's assassination and still hasn't been rebuilt.

During one meeting, members of the association argue over the specifics of a financial restructuring plan and then debate the best way to teach their children traditional tribal dances. Members of the Ewe tribe, like many other Ghanaians in the United States, represent an American success story. Drawing on African traditions and determined efforts at self-improvement, Ewe living in Chicago have fused traditional African virtues with American ones. Members are intensely community oriented, upwardly mobile, hard working, and entrepreneurial. They have little use for big government. They offer few kind words for Afrocentrism and want little to do with most black Americans.

In the Chicago area, nine Ghanaian tribes (without exception, Ghanaians use the word "tribe" rather than the politically correct "ethnic group") run organizations similar to the Milenovisi Habobo. The Ewe group is roughly typical: Two of Chicago's Ghanaian councils are a good deal bigger, four are about the same size, and two are smaller. Although nobody keeps track of exact numbers, members estimate there are roughly 300 Ewe adults in the Chicago area, and perhaps 200 minor children. The various tribal organizations coordinate activities through the Ghana National Council, an umbrella organization that coordinates social calendars and organizes a day-long Ghana-fest each year in Chicago.

In a sprawling metropolis where machine politics never quite died, the tribal councils act a little like the old Democratic party ward organizations that still exist in some parts of Chicago. But rather than delivering votes to a boss downtown the tribal organizations keep a sense of community alive among immigrants.

Clement Timpo serves as president of the Ewe tribe, a position he has held for five years. "My job," he says, "is to take care of people. If somebody needs money, if somebody is stranded in a strange city, if there's a death in the family, I do what I can to help them out." He's helped new arrivals register their children for school, called city officials on behalf of tribe members having problems with the government, and helped raise money for families where a wage earner has died. His work on behalf of

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the tribe—some weeks as much as 25 hours—is an unpaid addition to his full-time job.

On a day-to-day basis the Milenovisi Habobo serves two major purposes: It plans social events, and it provides an informal but very generous burial/life insurance system. The highlight of tribal social life comes when the organization combines those two functions.

When a tribe member dies, the tribe pitches in $250 to help with the family's immediate needs. Tribe members visit the deceased's family to do shopping and housework. Then, over the course of a few weeks, the deceased member's tribe contacts other tribal organizations around Chicago and across the country. Through phone calls, e-mail, and flyers, the word spreads. The friends and tribe members of the deceased organize a large party. If the person had any degree of prominence or has small children, out-of-towners sometimes charter aircraft to fly into the city. During a meeting in February, members of Chicago's Ewe organization looked over a flyer announcing the death of a woman in Washington, D.C. Many made plans to go to her memorial. One man even made hotel arrangements on his cell phone during a break in the meeting.

Ewe tribesmen living in Chicago have fused traditional African virtues with American ones. They have little use for big government.

When the day of the funeral arrives, the Ewe follow an established pattern. After a traditional, solemn Christian service, mourners adjourn to a community center or club. They pour libations on the ground and slowly begin to loosen up and celebrate the life of the deceased. They eat, drink, dance, and remember the dead person's life. They make donations to the family of the deceased. "In Ghana, it would go all night," says Beatrice Konku-Mantey, a bonded courier who runs a catering business on weekends. "Here, we quit around 3 A.M. People need to go to work on time the next day."

The parties are effective. Tribe leaders collect donations for the family of the deceased in amounts as high as $15,000. Most of the money goes to provide for a traditional burial in an ancestral burial ground in the village the person comes from. These traditional funeral rites also play a major role in reinforcing and building community feeling. "It's a lot more interesting than writing to the government for a check," says Konku-Mantey.

The Ewe council also offers other services. Timpo has matched tribal children with adult mentors working in their areas of interest. Tribe members are investigating group health insurance. And thanks partly to these informal supports, the Ewe almost entirely avoid government aid.

Welfare dependence receives open scorn. "That's something for the black Americans—they're all on it," one Ewe told me. "We want to depend on ourselves." This sentiment goes beyond eschewing welfare. Unlike black Americans and professionals in Ghana itself, very few Ghanaian immigrants seek upward mobility through government jobs, with the exception of a smattering of public school teachers.

The self-reliance of the Ewe is partly a matter of demographics. According to the Immigration and Naturalization Service figures, African immigrants to the United States have a higher average level of education than persons from any other continent—higher, in fact, than for the American population as a whole. Chicago's Ewe community of about 500 counts three physicians, three or four people with doctorates, and a healthy sprinkling of others with advanced degrees.

These highly trained persons often express some discontent with life as an immigrant. "In Ghana, I'd probably be the head of a ministry or at least my own department. Here, I'm a middle manager and don't see much change," says Timpo. Nonetheless, he is planning to stay. "It was a sacrifice I thought I had to make for my children. They live here and are part of American culture."

Tita Kpongo, who holds a doctorate from the University of Chicago and has taught math at Chicago State University, sees a clear division in Chicago's Ghanaian community. "There are the people from the cities who come here and find that a lot of things are the same. They live the same way that they would in Ghana," he says. "The real difference is what's around them."

Most Ghanaians in Chicago, however, perhaps as many as 70 percent, come from rural areas. Thanks to what is probably the best education system in sub-Saharan Africa, they learned to speak English and sometimes French or German in school. Still, few managed to finish high school in Ghana, and most were very poor in their native land. Few Ghanaian villages are wholly electrified, and indoor running water is a luxury. Per-capita income in Ghana is under $1,000; so most of the Ewe immigrants came from physical surroundings far worse than even the poorest Americans experience.

Sampson Akotuahi, who works as salesman at one of Chicago's larger auto dealers, is typical of this group. "I came here looking for a better life," he says. "Things were just very grim in Ghana," where the economy tracked downward from the nation's independence in 1957. Founding leader Kwame Nkrumah racked up heavy debt to finance his socialist plans. A 1966 military coup ousted him but ushered in economic anarchy followed by more socialism and corruption. Desperate men and women began to flee from villages to the cities, and abroad if they could find the means. Akotuahi was part of the wave. By the time the emigration leveled off in the 1980s, nearly one out of every 20 Ghanaian adults had left the country.

Akotuahi came to the United States with little education and virtually no money. He had always been pretty good at getting people to buy things and went through a succession of jobs, each a bit better than the last. Today he sells cars. He's married,

Eli Lehrer is a staff reporter at Insight.

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has children, and owns a home: typical for an American but a stunning achievement by Ghanaian standards. He became an American citizen in 1996. "I believe in this country, I believe in the opportunity," he says. "I've learned how to make money, how to sell things." His dream is to go back to Ghana and set up his own car dealership. "Ghanaians have a lot to learn about American capitalism," he said. "We need to bring our standards to them and get Ghana moving."

Konku-Mantey has a similar story to tell. She came to the United States after time in England, working as a nanny for a British family that brought her from Ghana to the U.K. "I guess it was sort of like slavery," she jokes. "But at least it got me here."

She eventually immigrated to the United States from Britain, and after working as a housekeeper and in other jobs, found her current position as a courier ten years ago. She was good at it and soon figured out how to garner the more lucrative assignments. She saved her money and eventually married an engineer from Accra, in a match arranged by her village elders. Although she sometimes slips and calls Ghana home, Konku-Mantey calls herself an American. "I came here for the opportunity and intend to stay." She's taken a series of cooking courses and runs a small business in her spare time: catering parties with hybrid African-American-British cuisine. A typical menu might include a California salad with 12 kinds of lettuce, Cornish game hens, and spicy okra soup.

Although only a handful of Ghanaians in Chicago work for themselves full time, nearly every other one seems to be running some sort of business on the side. Some are partners in small stores, caterers, or importers of African goods. The better positioned often step in to lend a hand to those launching an enterprise. Some Ewe have begun talking about setting up a mutual investment club, which many Asian immigrants have used to raise capital for small businesses. "We'd like to follow the patterns of the Asians; they've managed to achieve a lot," says Akotuahi.

Most Ghanaians self-consciously reject black American culture in general, and American Afrocentrism in particular. They try to follow the way of life they remember from Africa. The real spirit of the tribe, most members say, is carried in its morals. "Family is key," said Konku-Mantey. "We value our children, taking care of our families, and taking care of each other."

Although many of the urban-born Ghanaians demonstrate a bemused detachment from Afrocentrism, the rural residents seem horrified by its grandiose claims. Konku-Mantey's views are typical of rural-born Ghanaians. "It's silly," she says. "I'm not sure what they are trying to be—I guess Ethiopians or something." Even the handful of Ghanaians who call themselves Afrocentrists don't have much good to say about American Afrocentrists. Kpongo waxes eloquent about traditional African patterns of thought and the community-centric behavior he identifies as particularly African. But he accuses American Afrocentrists of thinking in a fundamentally European mindset when they study Africa. "White people can be Afrocentrists," he insists, and "being black doesn't make you one." He has no problem with calling sub-Saharan Africa "the most backward place on earth." Indeed, he scorns the Afrocentrists who believe in a glorious African past. "They always talk about the past, how great it was. Not about how we are going to achieve development" today. He dreams of a return to Afrocentrism being used as a means for the continent's scientific development. "I'll be really impressed when [prominent U.S. Afrocentrist] Molefi Asante writes a linear algebra book. Until then, I'm skeptical," he says.

In many areas, the Ewe tribe members are quite eager to assimilate into American culture. The preamble to an association document calls for making the organization "a viable part of mainstream American culture." Ewes rarely live or work in predominantly black areas. Most are mainline Protestants (usually Episcopalians) and often go to majority-white churches. Many count whites among their best friends, and to the extent they have black friends these are often from the culturally similar West Indies. They've embraced capitalism and desperately want to live the American dream. "We don't want our children hanging around in malls or on street corners and wearing $300 sneakers," says Konku-Mantey. "It's not part of our culture."

These immigrants from Ghana offer few kind words for Afrocentrism.

Ewe, however, remain fiercely proud of their unique culture and, as much as they don't want their children to "act black," they don't want their children to become entirely submerged in mainstream "white" American culture either. Despite their embrace of capitalism, Ewe also display some skepticism towards the inequality they see in America. Even Akotuahi, the man who dreams of starting a car dealership in Ghana, says he sees flaws in the American social fabric. "Sometimes people aren't willing enough to give up things for themselves, for their families or their communities. It's a problem."

Most Ewes seem doubtful they have much to offer American blacks. Whenever one asks an Ewe about social pathologies in black ghettoes, one hears the same refrain: It's not part of our culture. "The fact that they look like us doesn't mean that they're anything like us; they're really different," one tribe member says of American blacks. "They have their culture and we have ours."

Ewe sometimes question how long their cultural uniqueness will last. Old-timers dread some signs of assimilation. Kpongo, the math professor, says his American-born daughter identifies with black American culture. "My daughter has embraced black culture. She says she won't go to any white-man's college; she wants to go to a black college," he reports. "I want her to pursue excellence. Harvard is better than Howard." Oth-

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Welfare dependence receives open scorn. "That's something for black Americans. We want to depend on ourselves."

ers in the tribe say that while some of their children pursue such black identities, the majority do not. "Most of our children want to be Africans and Americans. Not black Americans," says Konku.

More distressing to ardent traditionalists, the tribal organization's paid membership has been going down in recent years, even as the Ewe population of Chicago continues to swell. "We've had to do what we can with what we have," Timpo said to the assembled Ewe during one meeting. "People don't always seem to be interested." European immigrants also experienced a similar pattern of old-world bonds loosening over time. This may represent an unavoidable, if not necessarily healthy, stage in the cultural evolution of immigrant communities. And while the decline of Jewish synagogues, Czech Sokals, and German sport and culture associations may have undone community ties, it did not undo economic and social progress among Jews, Czechs, or Germans in the United States.

There is some evidence that Ewe and other Ghanaians are moving into the American mainstream. A handful of Ghanaians have won local elected offices in the Washington, D.C. area, and Ewe tribe members have taken leading positions in some Chicago-area churches. At the moment, however, it's difficult to tell what social path most American-born Ewe children will follow. The handful of American-born Ewe who have so far set out on their own tend to be headed toward professional occupations. Yet, partly because of their unwillingness to marry Americans of any race, Ewe have tended to have their children later in life, and so in most of the families I interviewed the children are still quite young. The future of the Ewe in America will unfold only as these youngsters come into their own.

It is quite possible the Ewe will eventually disappear as a distinct American group, that they will blend wholly into mainstream America. On the other hand, their distinct customs and organizations may well survive and even thrive in a busy land where close-knit family and community ties can be great assets. Timpo believes the Ewe organizations are important in keeping the bonds of clan alive. "We came to America, and we like a lot of what we see here," he says. "But we want to hold on to what makes us Africans. It may be hard, but I hope we'll manage."

INDEPENDENTS' DAY continued from page 47

ground vocalists during BeBe and CeCe's concert tours. When, in 1993, BeBe and CeCe turned to solo projects, Angie and Debbie struck out on their own as a duo. That year, they released their first album on Capitol Records. It sold over 100,000 copies and earned a Grammy nomination. The two were also tapped to be the opening act for Whitney Houston's national tour.

Houston, a family friend, provided the background vocals for one of Angie and Debbie's songs, and she wanted the two to be the debut act on her own new record label. But after praying about it, Angie and Debbie concluded that a secular record company would require them to water down their message. They opted instead to form their own label, Against the Flow Records, to safeguard their spiritual integrity. In 1997, Against the Flow produced Angie and Debbie's controversial album *Bold*.

"The world is bold," Angie says, referring to the immorality exalted in popular entertainment today. "And so the Lord told us to be bold." The two describe the album as "the Word of God put to music." The songs address adultery ("Strange Woman"), risqué apparel ("Never Gonna"), abortion ("Ryan's Song), and, most incendiary of all, homosexuality and other ills ("Not Natural"). "Not Natural" mushroomed into a huge controversy in 1997, culminating in over 30 death threats being sent to their publicist. MTV, VH1, The Box, and Black Entertainment Television all banned the video.

But Angie and Debbie seem unruffled. "People are wasting their time in trying to shut us up," Angie bluntly advises. Debbie says the controversy was "joyful," because "it meant that the work was doing what it was meant to accomplish.... The backlash was just proof that the Word had reached them."

In preparing to write the album, Debbie recalls, the sisters read articles, watched the news, and saw "just how far things have gone away from God." "The world is full of destruction. It doesn't seem bright, it doesn't seem hopeful, and the only hope is Jesus."

Debbie's voice exudes hope as she explains why the controversy does not faze her. "The devil is already defeated," she says. "That's why we can't afford to take it personally."

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Stephen Carter is black, intellectual, and...

Out of the Box

By Bill Kauffman

"To be black and intellectual is to live in a box," declared Yale Law professor Stephen L. Carter almost a decade ago, whereupon the owners of the box factory nodded sympathetically and furnished for him two boxes: the "liberals' favorite black conservative," and the "conservatives' favorite black liberal." To Carter's credit, neither box has a lived-in feel.

Stephen Carter was threatened, for a time, with the imprimatur of soulless neoliberalism. "Every American should read" Carter's *The Culture of Disbelief* (1993) advised President Clinton, who went on to teach every American a thing or two about disbelief. But this, too, passed, and though Carter may well end his career answering to the honorific "Justice," he has drifted beyond the liberal/conservative humdrum and into less charted but deeper waters. For as he makes clear in his newest book, *Civility*, and in a recent interview with me, Stephen Carter may or may not be a black conservative, but he definitely is an even scarcer oxymoron: a devout Episcopalian.

Carter's father, Lisle, was an attorney in the Great Society-era Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and later a professor at Cornell University. Carter traces middle-class ancestry back at least four generations on his father's side and at least two on his maternal side. Some friends, he notes, "puzzled by my writing on affirmative action, mark it down to the peculiarity of my background—born to the silver spoon, never having known what it is to want." But if his outlook is in part a product of the old self-confident urban black middle class, it owes as much to geographical as to social mobility, for young Stephen would call three very different places home: Harlem; Washington, D.C.'s white Cleveland Park section; and Ithaca, New York. He attended mostly black Harlem schools through the sixth grade and mostly white schools thereafter, picking up the nickname "Brillo" from a white wit in junior high school.

Carter was graduated from Ithaca High School in the class of 1972, a brainy kid with a big Afro. He had a "wry sense of humor" and a "precision of speech," recalls Elsie Dentes, a classmate. He was the only black kid in the "smart" math and science classes. In stratified Ithaca he was a "Cornell kid," from somewhere else, on his way to somewhere else. Did this make for an awkward relationship with black kids at the other end of the academic scale? "I had friends who were white and friends who were black," recalls Carter, "but they were different sets of friends. If I was with my black friends, there weren't any white people around," and vice versa. "That was in retrospect quite sad, but true."

He says he learned two things as a black student in white schools. The first was "a strong understanding of the principle that a lot of black parents used to tell their kids: 'You've got to be twice as good....'" The other lesson is that it is "impossible for me to say, 'Oh, all white people are hopelessly racist,' because I had a lot of friends who were white, and certainly my teachers were overwhelmingly white, and a lot of them helped me a great deal."

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Carter's first book, the provocatively titled *Reflections of an Affirmative Action Baby (1991)*, is admirably blunt. "I got into [Yale] law school because I was black," he states, and he recalls, with a mixture of indignation and amusement, that Harvard Law first rejected this Stanford graduate and then hastily offered admission. ("We assumed from your record that you were white," explained a Harvard professor.)

These insults he bore with equanimity. He denies that "there lurks inside each black professional a confused and uncertain ego, desperately seeking reassurance," and there is in his attitude an echo of novelist Zora Neale Hurston's famous declaration that "I am not tragically colored. There is no great sorrow damned up in my soul, nor lurking behind my eyes.... I do not belong to the sobbing school of Negrohood who hold that nature has given them a lowdown dirty deal and whose feelings are all hurt about it."

Carter is not an abolitionist when it comes to affirmative action; he does not believe that Biff from Groton and Jamal from Newark should have their SAT scores fed into a computer and be rank-ordered on an admissions department printout. He explains that he is "all for putting the finger on the scale at the college admissions level, because we really know so little about what's going to make someone successful in various fields." But the finger comes off the scale at hiring time. "When one's training is done, when the time comes for entry to the job market, the case for preferences evaporates."

At all events, "the end of affirmative action is near," he declared in 1991, and the end grows nigher. "My nationalistic side" tells Carter that "drug problems, the epidemic of teen pregnancy, young people not being educated in the schools—affirmative action is not going to solve any of these problems."

His hope rests not with a liberal constitutionalism, which he now writes off as tyrannical, but rather in communities of the Christian faithful. "Left and right in America nowadays divide principally over the question of which conclusions to enforce, not over whether the national sovereign should be doing it," he asserts. Against this "hegemonic vision of the nation as a single community with a single set of values" Carter sets an alternative vision of families and self-governing communities making their own way, their own mistakes, their own places. That many of these communities would be Christian is all to the good, in Carter's view.

In his book-length essay *The Dissent of the Governed* (1998), Carter puckishly notes that "born-again Christians are woefully underrepresented at the nation's elite campuses, but when was the last time students or faculty organized to demand that more be hired?" I ask him, "If a scholar were being considered for a spot on the Yale Law faculty, and it became known that he was a born-again Christian, would it become less likely that he'd be hired?"

"I sure hope not," Carter replies, though he remarks that just as anti-Catholicism was once called the anti-Semitism of intellectuals, "anti-Evangelical fervor seems to be greater," and not just among the strenuously secular. Carter recalls that "a Yale divinity student and I happened to be in a classroom together, and the letters of the alphabet were on the blackboard, as though for a kindergarten class. He said, 'Evangelical theology.'"

Carter, who frequently lectures gatherings of journalists on their coverage of religion, urges them to "avoid using the phrase 'religious right' altogether," for it "really has become pejorative." Nor does it have a homologue— "say, lifestyle left." He has little interest in causes like the promotion of prayer and creationism in public schools, preferring the pluralist vision of small private schools wherein the faithful can "educate our children in an environment that celebrates, not demeans, their religious beliefs, one that is responsive to our concerns about morality and parental responsibility."

Harvard first rejected and then offered admission ("We assumed from your record that you were white.")

A cradle Episcopalian, Stephen Carter "didn't go to church when I was a kid." He traces his religious awakening to the Kestenbaums, a Jewish family with whom he lived for a school year so that he could finish ninth grade in Washington before joining his family in Ithaca. The Kestenbaums were observant Jews; for Carter, "it was the first time I'd ever spent a significant amount of time with a deeply religious family. It helped me to realize how important faith was to me and how important it was going to be to me to have a faithful family when I grew older." He married the "deeply religious" Enola Aird, and they are raising their children in an Episcopalian household. (He jokingly acknowledges the denominational stereotype: "they rarely know what's in the Bible, but they always know the price of the Dow.") The Carters' son attends a Christian school and their daughter is in a secular private school, but, her father notes with pride, "her classmates voted her the most religious girl in seventh grade last year."

Civility is Carter's best book—despite its forbidding title, for "civility" can be a cant word used to expel radicals and reactionaries from public debate. In it, Carter is both trenchant and impassioned in critiquing the state's takeover of traditional family functions. "As parents of two magnificent children, my wife and I occasionally feel as though the state views the family as a little citizen-making factory, which must be run according to government specifications lest we lose our license. Lost in the march toward regulation of the family is the traditional notion that the family is prior to the state."

(A reader's cavil: In *Civility,* Carter sometimes lapses into what Joseph Epstein calls "quotatiousness," burdening the text with the thought of such eminently unquotable grandees as Ellen Goodman.)

Associate editor Bill Kauffman is the author of four books, most recently With Good Intentions? Reflections on the Myth of Progress in America.

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I ask him about homeschooling and he grants his approval: "It provides for the child a morally coherent world, and it illustrates the sacrifice a parent will make: 'Not only will I not go out to the workplace to earn a living,' the homeschooling parent says, 'but I will take all of this time during the day and at night to get ready in order to teach you what I think you need to know.'"

Carter's politics might best be described as similar to those of the late Christopher Lasch: conservative in that he defends the autonomy of settled communities and the beliefs of religious and working people; leftist in that he accepts the necessity of state action to redistribute wealth (or "equalize the playing field," as he says). He argues that this places him in the mainstream of black Americans, whose churchgoers "tend to be on nearly every moral issue well to the right of the American political mean." Many black Americans are "socially conservative yet economically liberal, and sooner or later, a lot of religious black people may stop voting, or may begin voting for more conservative candidates."

Talk turns to the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. I ask if King "has been stripped of his Christianity by his idolators?"Carter, who acknowledges King as "one of my great heroes," muses, "In that respect, it may have been a mistake to have the national holiday. Don't get me wrong—I'm for it—but by putting him in this pantheon you can lose the prophetic power. This man believed that God was charging him with changing a nation. That's an enormous presumption that only a powerfully religious person would make. When he becomes a figure who 'fought for civil rights' and kids sing songs and so on, the power is lost."

Carter worries that "whenever a problem needs a solution, we imitate the civil rights model—a hefty centralized bureaucracy, backed up with uncompromising judges and well-armed troops." This blunderbuss was "inevitable" in the 1960s, "given our decision not to come face-to-face with our shared capacity for wickedness," but it became the prototype of a development Carter regards with disfavor: "the project of liberal constitutionalism, the effort to knit the nation into a single community sharing a single normative vision of the world."

Thus the ambivalence that makes Carter's most recent work the richest—if most hesitating and uncertain—of his career. "I suspect that our love for federal power is really a love for the formal equality rules that federal power was able to produce," he writes, for if we "imagine a national sovereign in the 1950s under the control of the southern segregationists and trying to force Jim Crow on a resisting North, I doubt that our image today of the relative benevolence of the two powers, the state and the federal, would be the same." Yet just several pages later Carter is capable of writing "I am troubled by our recent emphasis on federalism, with its celebration of unwilled and arbitrary geographic divisions." This, perhaps, is the other side of his early mobility, since no one who has lived in one place for long years would call its boundaries "arbitrary."

In *Civility*, Carter laments that "we do not even know the names of our neighbors," but he largely ignores the culprit: the frequent moves, the rootlessness of the professional classes. The rudeness he quite eloquently decries surely results partly from our instability. For example, I have given the finger to reckless motorists on the Interstate, but I would not do so in my hometown, not because no one has ever cut me off but because I'm afraid that the lady I digitally salute just might be my first-grade teacher or my neighbor the volunteer fireman, who would drop everything to come save my house.

For his part, Stephen Carter has put down his own roots just outside New Haven. Does he ever daydream about a Supreme Court nomination? "No," he replies, laughing. "Ten or 15 years ago I might have said no, but I would have been lying. Even if I had that ambition, I would not dream of putting my family through the confirmation process." What is more, "I don't think that's a direction in which God is moving me. There are particular paths God wants each of us to walk, and all we can do is look for evidence of what that path might be. Usually the evidence is found in small things, not in the large."

"Whenever a problem needs a solution, we imitate the civil-rights model—a hefty centralized bureaucracy backed up with uncompromising judges and well-armed troops."

Carter does seem ill-suited for heavy-lifting in the anthill of official Washington. When he talks about God and his family he could not be less unctuous; these are not talking points but simply the stuff of his everyday life. It's hard to imagine him inviting the press to watch him perform at a power-prayer breakfast. He has written, "I am constantly amazed, and constantly depressed, by the number of my professedly egalitarian colleagues at Yale who do not seem to know the names of the people who clean their offices, despite encountering them several times a week for many years." (Curiously, Clarence Thomas, whose nomination Carter opposed, is said to be the sole Supreme Court justice who takes an interest in the J.D.-less workers at the Supreme Court.)

It is this basic decency, the refusal to permit class or ideology to mold one's friendships, that Carter most admired about Justice Thurgood Marshall, for whom he clerked. A "marvelous man in every respect," Marshall "had an enormously capacious acceptance of other people. He would describe with Christian affection people who were on the other side in the segregation era; Marshall would talk about them warmly. I was astonished to find this man who had to run for his life from segregationists during his days of litigating cases able to say of so-and-so, 'Oh, he was a great man and a decent man that just happened to believe in segregation.' That was an eye opener for me."

The cost of ending that segregation was the erection of a centralized civil-rights apparatus fortified by the guns and money of the federal government. An alternative to leviathan—a nation of self-governing communities based on neighborliness, Christian love, and heartfelt charity—is taking shape, albeit cautiously and ambiguously, in the writings of Stephen Carter. The air is much freer, and the view far better, outside the box.

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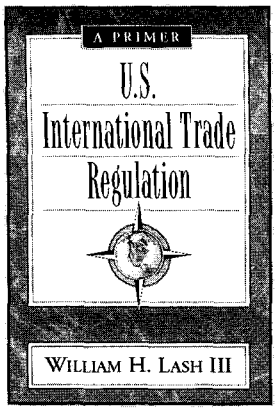

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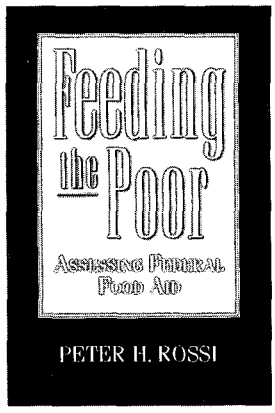
By Peter H. Rossi



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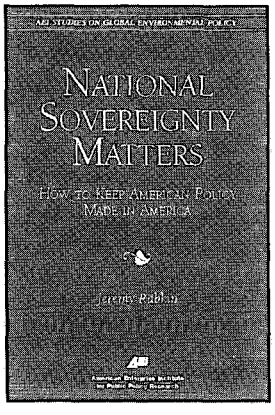

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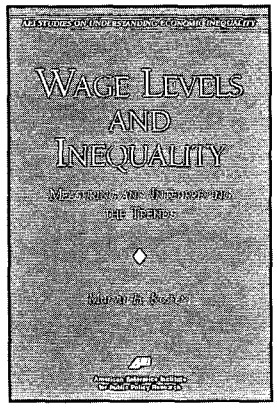

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The growing ranks of non-liberal blacks

Independents' Day

By Andrew Peyton Thomas

Political diversity has taken root in black America, and we are beginning to see its fruit. A remarkable variety of new voices have addressed everything from economics to morality to affirmative action in ways that diverge sharply from the orthodoxy enforced by the black civil rights establishment.

The following are vignettes of men and women in the new black vanguard who have begun to challenge the existing political order, even at the cost of rough treatment from the liberal elites whose opinions and power they would displace. The group includes intellectuals, politicians, businessmen, sports stars, musicians, ministers, and journalists. A varied lot, they share two qualities: a fierce determination to think and act for themselves, and an abundance of moral courage.

ELOISE ANDERSON

A former recipient of food stamps and a high-ranking social-services administrator under Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson, Eloise Anderson was an intriguing selection when, in 1992, California Governor Pete Wilson appointed her director of the California Department of Social Services. Since federal welfare reform passed in 1996, Anderson has given no quarter to defenders of the *ancien régime*. Her moment of national fame came in a blunt exchange with Leslie Stahl of "60 Minutes," who was aghast when Anderson insisted welfare should be eliminated. Under Governor Wilson's leadership, Anderson has settled for a more modest strategy, one centered on child immunization and good school attendance as preconditions for parents receiving aid. She has also helped to craft California's new welfare reform program, CalWORKs, which devolves authority to the state's 58 counties.

JONETTA ROSE BARRAS

Washington Times columnist Jonetta Rose Barras laughs when asked if she is a black nationalist. "I do think [my writing] borders on radicalism at times because it takes the concept of cultural allegiance beyond what we saw in the '70s and '80s, which I consider rather narcissistic." She cites Frederick Douglass and Marcus Garvey as intellectual heroes for making the case that black Americans should dedicate themselves to their hallmark virtues, industry and religiosity. "Somewhere along the line, we devalued our inheritance," she laments. And yet, "these values are like a fine silver platter. If you neglect to polish it, it's no less valuable a piece. You just have to clean it off and put it back on the shelf."

A District of Columbia resident, Barras recently wrote *The Last of the Black Emperors*, a critical history of Mayor Marion Barry's career since leaving federal prison in 1992. Despite the District's racial polarization, Barras is optimistic that race will fade in importance as blacks move into the upper and middle classes, where economics will supplant race as blacks' main gauge for making political decisions. She notes with justifiable pride that black culture "has become a marketing tool for corporate America," as young whites come to emulate its talk and dress. "African-American culture is becoming American culture."

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J. KENNETH BLACKWELL

When 80 percent of Ohio voters this year rejected a $1.1 billion tax hike aimed at school "equalization," it was a slap at the Republican leadership of the Buckeye State—but not at state treasurer Kenneth Blackwell, who opposed the increase.

Now running for governor, Blackwell hopes to reap the rewards of this record of fiscal integrity. Since becoming state treasurer in 1994, he has advocated a flat tax, a three-fifths supermajority requirement for raising taxes, and a single-rate tax system with a generous personal exemption. His earlier jobs include stints as vice president of Xavier University, Mayor of Cincinnati, deputy undersecretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and U.S. Representative to the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

Blackwell is averse to racial politicking, which he sees as unAmerican. "Our democracy is based on the premise that we have God-given rights," he says. "They are not grants from government.... If you respect the individual as primary, and view those rights as coming from a Creator, you have greater respect for diversity as well."

TONY BROWN

Tony Brown has just fired off an angry letter to *Time*, but "I don't expect them to publish it." His temper has flared over the glowing praise given to Julian Bond's take-no-prisoners defense of affirmative action before the NAACP. Brown's letter describes Bond as a slippery character whose "ultimate god" is "the liberal white establishment."

Clearly no steward of that establishment, Brown is hard to categorize politically; he seems to belong to a party of one. In the same letter, he blasts affirmative-action foe Ward Connerly as someone who "flat out hates black people." As host of the PBS series "Tony Brown's Journal," one of the nation's longest-running TV shows, Brown exalts economic self-reliance for the black community. "Money is the currency of power," he explains. "If all whites fell in love with all blacks and racism disappeared, nothing would change for most blacks."

In his book *Black Lies, White Lies,* Brown attacks "lies...perpetrated by black elitists who censor anyone who dares to challenge them," as well as lies by "white liberals who have stifled black economic development for generations by leading them down the path of dependence." He frankly declares that racial peace does not have to mean immediate integration: "We do not have to like each other. We do not have to live next door to each other."

Brown despises affirmative action, telling *TAE* "we have alienated and marginalized the black community with affirmative action, and we've convinced many if not most whites that blacks can't compete." He condemns President Clinton for not being "sincerely interested in bringing about economic and educational equality for black people," which is shown, for example, by the appointment of establishment liberal John Hope Franklin to chair the national race commission.

Andrew Peyton Thomas is writing a book with Reggie White. Fighting the Good Fight *will be published in March 1999.*

JOHN SIBLEY BUTLER

"I really don't give a damn about the right to vote," professor John Sibley Butler says. "Blacks in the South created wealth without it. Successful whites don't give a s_ _ _ about the right to vote, either—unless they want to buy a politician."

Butler, a sociologist and professor of entrepreneurship and small business at the University of Texas, is adamant about putting "economics at the top of everything" when making a list of social priorities: "It's always been the merchants who run America." Accordingly, he believes the solution to the problems of black Americans, and poorer Americans generally, is to be found in economic empowerment.

"The biggest problem in America today," Butler argues, "is that for the first time in our history, a white person can finish high school and not get a good job. We need to figure out a way to bring production back to America." Unless our society can find a way to ensure that "poor whites can earn enough money to build a house, buy a car, and go to college," we should not be shocked when they continue to "join militias and distrust the federal government. Black America, in turn, needs to get back to what it does well: creating wealth through hard work. "Wealth creation in America is an art that's dying."

HERMAN CAIN

As a boy, Herman Cain slept on a roll-away cot in the kitchen of a one-bedroom, rented house. He watched his father work three jobs to lift his family out of poverty. After earning a mathematics degree from Morehouse College and then a master's degree in computer science from Purdue (while working as a mathematician for the Department of the Navy), Cain joined Pillsbury. Within five years, at the age of 34, he was promoted to vice-president for corporate systems and services.

Two years later, he resigned his position to learn the restaurant business from the ground up by making hamburgers in Pillsbury's Burger King division. Nine months later, he was managing the 400 Burger King units in the Philadelphia region, and within three years that region rose from the company's poorest performer to the best.

Promoted to the presidency of the then-financially troubled Godfather's Pizza, Cain led it back to profitability in only 14 months. Two years later, he led a buy-out of the company from Pillsbury. Now serving as president of the National Restaurant Association, Cain became well-known to conservatives when he challenged the Clinton health care proposal in a national town hall meeting.

Cain has since become a popular inspirational speaker and a gospel recording artist, as well as a vocal critic of minimum wage increases and a federal tax code that "penalizes eco-

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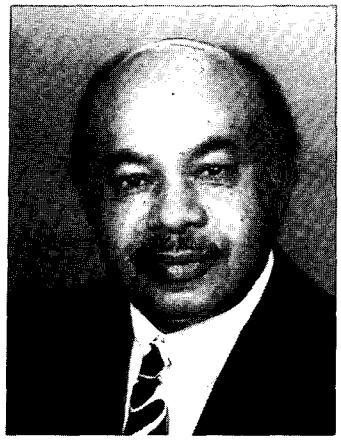
nomic prosperity." But he doesn't minimize the difficulties involved in becoming prosperous: "Because I am a black American," he says, I've "got to perform a little better in order to get the same opportunity.... It should not be this way, but it is."

WARD CONNERLY



Asked recently to serve as state finance chairman for California's Republicans, Ward Connerly says he agreed "for six months only." He understandably feels overwhelmed with public demands. In 1996, he served as chairman of the successful California Civil Rights Initiative, also known as Proposition 209, which prohibited racial preferences in state contracting and employment and public university admissions. The battle taxed both time and spirit and required enduring relentless vilification from the civil rights establishment.

The prime challenge of the new century, Connerly believes, is to "take all of these exciting and complex differences we have along racial and ethnic lines and...merge them into 'one nation, indivisible.'" Noting that his own lineage is Choctaw Indian, French, Irish, and African American, Connerly jokes that blacks "have more in common with Tonto than Kunta Kinte." This racial blending now is happening at a quickening pace. "My wife and I were at the movies last weekend," he recalls, "and we saw more interracial couples in an hour than we would've seen 30 years ago in the whole country."

The diversity of opinion among even black dissidents is clear in Connerly's attitudes toward the gay rights movement. Where many conservative blacks, most notably Reggie White, have taken issue with homosexual activists' attempt to equate their cause with the civil rights movement, Connerly does not object to the comparison. "Civil rights are individual rights," he says. "I don't find anything in the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution that grants me the right to treat [homosexuals] any differently."

KAY COLES JAMES

At the end of a long, wearisome day, Kay Coles James's face lights up when asked for her thoughts on Justice Clarence Thomas's recent speech to the National Bar Association. "I was incredibly proud of him. It took so much courage to go before that audience and stand tall and defend his beliefs."

She should know. When she was Virginia's Secretary of Health and Human Resources, James helped to develop and implement Virginia's well-regarded welfare reform. But her efforts led the Roanoke branch of the NAACP to disinvite her from its annual banquet in 1995, after the organization's state office pressured the branch to withdraw the invitation. James criticized the state NAACP's "vitriolic attack" on her and defended her right to think for herself, but the NAACP ignored her protests.

Now dean of the Robertson School of Government at Regent University in Virginia Beach, James is still involved in politics. Congressional leaders appointed her to chair the National Gambling Impact Study Commission, which is examining the social and economic effects of legalized gambling in America. Although she feels it would be "inappropriate" to share her views on gambling at this juncture, she gives her views on society freely. "It concerns me a great deal that many of the principles on which we were founded now completely escape people," she says. "When you look at the polling data, people have a disregard for the things that are essential for democracy to survive." The country needs "leadership that has character and integrity. When the American people say that character is irrelevant, it makes me fear for the very stability of our democracy."

STANLEY CROUCH

Author Stanley Crouch has an appeal so eclectic that it probably wouldn't be safe to put in one room all the people, from left to right, who supplied blurbs for his latest book, *Always in Pursuit.*

Clarence Thomas, Black Independent Supreme,

One service Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas renders his country is periodically braving rough audiences. The latest spectacle occurred July 29, before the nation's largest organization of black lawyers. Many of the conventioneers grumbled before the speech; a small group walked out during it.

Shortly after Thomas's address, in remarks to the Association of Black Sociologists, San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown described the Supreme Court Justice as "a shill and cover for the most insidious form of racism." Thomas's views and actions represent a "legitimizing of the Ku Klux Klan," insisted the former Speaker of the California State Assembly. Brown added that Thomas:

> must not be allowed any comfort from any of us. The National Bar Association should never have invited Clarence Thomas, and your group should never invite him to speak. He should be reduced to talking to only white conservatives. He must be shut out [by African Americans].

Amidst these striking reminders of the ordeal that awaits blacks who stray from the liberal civil rights establishment, Thomas's speech offered the sight of the most powerful African American of our day pleading for tolerance. A condensed excerpt:

"The questioning for me started in the spring of 1970 after an unauthorized demonstration in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to "free the political prisoners." Why was I doing this rather than using my intellect? Why was I fighting much like a brute? It was intoxicating to act upon one's rage, to wear it on one's shoulder, to be defined by it. Yet, ultimately, it was destructive, and I knew it.

So in the spring of 1970, in a nihilistic fog, I prayed that I'd be relieved of the anger and the animosity that ate at my

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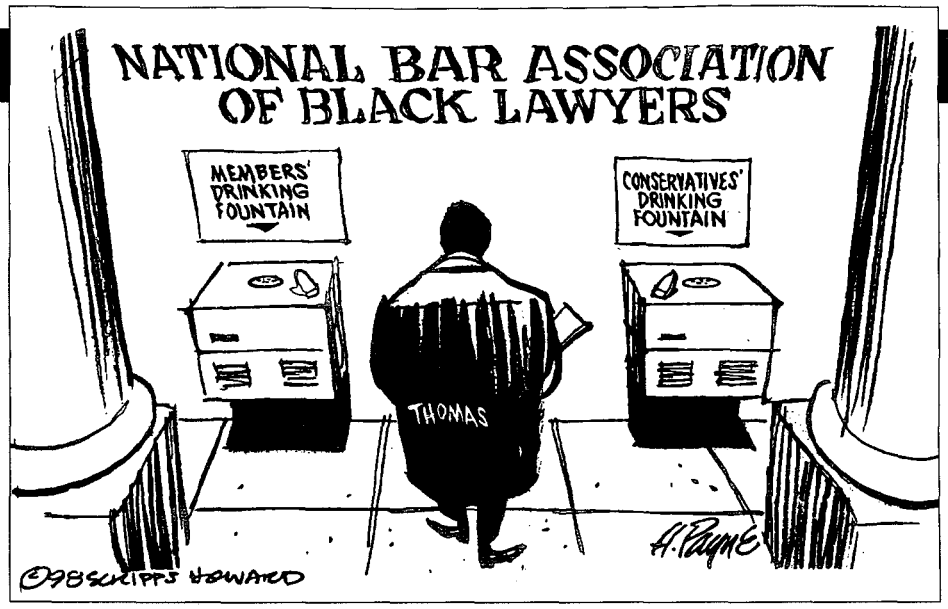

soul. I did not want to hate any more, and I had to stop before it totally consumed me. I had to make a fundamental choice. Do I believe in the principles of this country or not? After much angst, I concluded that I did.

There's a rush today to prescribe who is black, to prescribe what our differences are or to ignore what our differences are. It is customary to collapse, if not overwrite, our individual characteristics into new, but now acceptable stereotypes. Somehow we have come to exalt the new black stereotype above all and to demand conformity to that norm. Despite some of the nonsense that has been said about me by those who should know better, I am a man, a black man, an American. And my history is not unlike that of many blacks from the deep South. And in many ways it is not that much different from that of many other Americans. I understand the comforts and security of racial solidarity, defensive or otherwise. Only those who have not been set upon by hatred and repelled by rejection fail to understand its attraction.

But it is precisely this that I have rejected. My question was whether as an individual I truly believed that I was the equal of individuals who were white. This I had answered with a resounding "yes" in 1964 during my sophomore year in the seminary. And that answer continues to be yes.

Any effort, policy, or program that has as a prerequisite the acceptance of the notion that blacks are inferior is a nonstarter with me. I do not believe that kneeling is a position of strength. Nor do I believe that begging is an effective tactic. I am confident that the individual approach, not the group approach, is the better, more acceptable, more supportable and less dangerous one. This approach is also consistent with the underlying principles of this country and the guarantees of freedom through government by consent. I, like Frederick Douglass, believe that whites and blacks can live together and be blended into a common nationality.

It pains me deeply to be perceived by so many members of my race as doing them harm. All the sacrifice, all the long hours of preparation were to help, not to hurt. But what hurts more, much more, is the amount of time and attention spent on manufactured controversies and media sideshows when so many problems cry out for constructive attention.

I have come here today to assert my right to think for myself, to refuse to have my ideas assigned to me as though I was an intellectual slave because I'm black. I come to state that I'm a man, free to think for myself and do as I please.

I've come to assert that I am a judge and I will not be consigned the unquestioned opinions of others. Isn't it time to acknowledge that the problem of race has defied simple solutions and that not a single one of us can lay claim to the solution? Isn't it time that we respect ourselves and each other as we have demanded respect from others?"

He first made a name for himself as a jazz critic, and whatever his topic—politics, race, film, or any other aspect of American culture—he writes in distinctively bluesy rhythms. Politically unpredictable, he's as likely to attack pornography in Kenneth Starr's report as in gangsta rap, or to praise Justice Clarence Thomas as Johnnie Cochran. The praise can be lyrical, but the criticism is often as piercing as a high-C: Louis Farrakhan is a "racist," W. E. B. Du Bois "vastly overestimated."

A lover of America's founding principles, Crouch insists they don't require us to shed our distinctive heritages but to celebrate the great "mulatto" mix we share. He sees plenty of work to be done: "We still have to create an atmosphere in which all complaints from all sides can be discussed free of conservative smugness, liberal-heart hemophilia, and demagogic hysteria."

One of the worst hindrances, he wrote in *TAE* awhile back, is the "politics of resentment"—a "posturing" that "amounts to nothing more than frying the rotten fish of self-pity and blame on a griddle made hot by opportunism and greased with scoops from the bottomless Crisco can of white guilt."

KEN HAMBLIN

It does not take long to realize what Ken Hamblin does for a living. The sharp, deftly worded sentences that flow from his mouth are now heard on 100 radio stations nationwide. The self-styled "Black Avenger" notes that aspiring black politicos have it easy. "If you and I were to run for office," he says to his Caucasian interviewer, "you've got a political minefield to tiptoe through. But I've got a ready-made ghetto to turn to. I go back and run from there, where everybody is distrustful of the white man. Two years later, when I run for re-election, I'll wipe

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my brow with a hanky and say, 'I haven't delivered s_ _ _, but I had no idea how much the white man opposes us.' And they'll re-elect me and carry me off on their shoulders."

Hamblin, a self-described "old ghetto rat," was raised in New York's Bedford Stuyvesant neighborhood by Barbadian immigrants. "I realize that I'm not just black," he explains. "I'm part of a race that survived. We survived some of the worst conditions you can imagine. And we're right to be proud of that."

But having worked his way up in the world, he deplores the way the black political establishment criticizes upward mobility: "Today," he told one reporter, "the gifted black doctor or accountant or lawyer is savaged for being successful." These establishment black pols, he insists, "have done more harm to Negroes than anything in the cruelest antebellum novel."

GWEN DAYE & WILLIE RICHARDSON

Gwen Daye and Willie Richardson, the husband and wife who founded *Headway* magazine, have seen it grow to become what they describe as "the nation's leading publication of black conservative opinion." Black conservatives, Mrs. Richardson has explained, were often "Democrats at one time. The whole reason we left the Democratic party is that we didn't like the way they stereotyped blacks."

Both Richardsons have entrepreneurial backgrounds. Gwen Daye holds a marketing degree from Georgetown and began her own word-processing and medical transcription business at 25. Willie is president of Richberg Communications and former president of an electronics service firm. Still, Gwen Daye, who also writes a monthly column for *USA Today*, believes that the great issues of the day revolve around the decline of the family. "I'm amazed at how self-centered the members of Generation X are," she exclaims with particular concern. "Somewhere along the way, the knowledge [of right and wrong] wasn't transferred" to the next generation.

WARREN H. STEWART

To Warren H. Stewart of the First Institutional Baptist Church in Phoenix, civil rights are no anachronism. Pastor of the largest black church in Arizona (the congregation is approaching 3,000), Stewart earned his stripes in the civil rights movement by leading the successful campaign for a state holiday honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. But while other civil rights leaders steer clear of touchy cultural issues, Stewart has emerged as a leading proponent of the right to life.

Stewart believes African-Americans "have a special sympathy and sensitivity for those of us in the womb." He bluntly links black-on-black violence to the culture that *Roe v. Wade* imposed by judicial decree, and does not shrink from condemning other modern sins from the pulpit, including materialism, racism, and loose sexuality. In *How to Handle Giants: Sermons to African-American Youth and Their Mentors*, Stewart asks, "How can we tell a gangbanger to respect life when they are a part of a generation that the law allows to 'dis' life in the womb through abortion as birth control?"

AP Photo

REGGIE & SARA WHITE

The NFL's all-time sack leader and arguably the greatest defensive player in football history, Reggie White has been showered with boos from fans of opposing teams. Yet nothing could have braced him for the reception he provoked after striding to the podium before the Wisconsin Assembly in March and sharing his frank views on a wayward American society.

The so-called Minister of Defense—White is an ordained minister as well as a defensive end for the Green Bay Packers—hit the cultural Left with a stinging critique of its sins and excesses. White rejected sacrosanct comparisons between the gay rights movement and the civil rights movement. "Homosexuality is a decision, it's not a race," he declared. He also said there are differences among the races—gifts, he called them—that should be celebrated rather than obscured or condemned.

Unlike other celebrities who had said similar things but backed down after drawing abuse, White did not bend. "I like people to think good of me, but I'm not going to sell out," he said defiantly. And when he was interviewed on ABC's "20/20," Reggie's wife, Sara, chimed in with criticism of CBS Sports, which rescinded a job offer to Reggie. "They were afraid of the sodomite community," she asserted.

Now in his fourteenth and final season, White looks forward to devoting more time to his ministry, Urban Hope. He is considering starting his own movie studio. Co-founder of Urban Hope and, along with Reggie, a senior fellow with the Alexis de Tocqueville Institution, Sara has emerged alongside her husband as a hero of Christian conservatives.

Reggie is forgiving toward the gay rights activists and others who pilloried him after the speech. "We have to expect to be persecuted if we stand by God's laws," he explains. Homosexuality, he still contends, is a "broken image of God," which often results from a childhood of rape or abusive relationships. As for black leaders today, "I don't believe there is such a thing as 'black leadership.' If there were black leaders, there'd be less politics and more caring."

J. C. WATTS

Delegates for the Southern Republican Leadership Conference—who composed a third of all delegates to the 1996 GOP convention—met in Biloxi, Mississippi, earlier this year and overwhelmingly supported J. C. Watts as the party's Vice-Presidential candidate for 2000. When his parents christened him Julius Caesar Watts, Jr. in 1957, they could not have foreseen

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that one day the Democratic party would fear their son the way Pompey dreaded his namesake.

Born to a poor family in Eufaula, Oklahoma, Watts, 40, grew up to become quarterback for the Oklahoma Sooners in back-to-back Orange Bowl victories. When Watts ran for Congress in 1994 (from a 90 percent white district), it was the equivalent of Troy Aikman running for Congress from Dallas.

The Republican leadership has wasted little time in showcasing Watts. He was tapped to deliver both a prime-time address to the 1996 GOP Convention and the Republican response last year to the President's State of the Union address. Watts is unabashed in his defense of traditional Christianity and his desire to see it reflected once again in law: "I think when we can comfortably say as a nation that it does not matter what a person's integrity is as long as the economy is O.K., we've got problems," he tells *TAE*.

Watts has felt the sting of racism. "I remember the day very well when [as a child] I had to sit in the balcony of the movie theater. And I remember when my brother and his friends couldn't swim in the public pool. Several of my white friends quit the team when they made me quarterback." But he hastens to add, "there are two things that kept my heart from being hardened or poisoned: One is my faith, and the other is my parents. I was never taught to be a victim. One of the greatest things that my father gave me was something he didn't give me, and that's excuses."

The civil rights establishment, Watts contends, has erred mightily in doing the opposite, trafficking in racial excuses on a broad scale. They also have abandoned the good fight over cultural issues. Watts recalls seeing this in stark relief after Reggie White gave his speech to the Wisconsin Assembly in March. "Some of the old guard black leadership went after Reggie. And they went after me, too. But there was a time when they believed what we do. They stood with us. If you go back to look at what Dr. King stood for, there's nothing that would give the impression that he would be supporting much of what the Congressional Black Caucus is supporting today."

Summing up his outlook in a controversial interview with the *Washington Post*, Watts attacks "race-hustling poverty pimps," who "talk a lot about slavery, but they're perfectly happy to have just moved us to another plantation. What scares them the most is that black people might break out of that racial group thing and start thinking for themselves."

ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS

Based in Washington, D.C., Williams shares his message of moral renewal with the faithful on his national radio talk show. His biggest coup of late was enticing Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott into offering his views on homosexuality. Williams does not moor his views exclusively to religion. While he encourages moral "guidelines for society," he believes "these things aren't tied into religion. They're tied into virtue." People, he explains, can be moral "apart from being religious." Referring to the "myths and legends" taught by all religions, Williams observes, "The remarkable thing about stories of good and evil is that everybody can identify who's good and who's evil.... This proves that morality and virtue are not unalterably tied to religion."

His heroes are Clarence Thomas, under whom he served at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("His heart is as good as gold"), and his parents. About his parents, Williams recalls: "They never allowed us to drink from the trough of bitterness. The waters at home were always sweet."

That home was a Marion, South Carolina tobacco farm with ten children, but it was not Democratic. "I am a third-generation black Republican," he told one reporter, "and people know I honestly believe your success and failure doesn't come from white people. It comes from the choices you make. That's not selling out. That's owning up."

ANNETTE POLLY WILLIAMS

Polly Williams is flattered when compared with Rosa Parks, the famous black woman who refused to sit in the back of the bus. But she quickly issues a disclaimer: "Ms. Parks, there's no one else like her." Perhaps, but that has not deterred conservatives from invoking the civil rights heroine when heralding Williams' accomplishments in the Wisconsin state legislature. The mother of America's first school choice law, as well as the first school choice legislation to include religious schools, Williams has spearheaded a movement that has drawn the support of a majority of blacks across the country.

A Democrat who has campaigned for Jesse Jackson and served as a delegate to two national Democratic conventions, Williams has remained true to her party in other notable respects. But she is quick to unsheathe her sword when the teachers' unions set up obstacles to reforming the public schools. "The system wants to support itself, and everyone who's a part of it will fight to maintain it," she says.

She credits God with bestowing the power to hold fast against powerful adversaries. "You've got to stand tall," she counsels. "You can't back down. There's only one power, and that's God."

ANGIE & DEBBIE WINANS

AP Photo

Few families have sung God's praises better than the Winans. Of the eight children descended from David and Delores Winans, two—BeBe and CeCe Winans—are gospel superstars. More recently, two daughters have stirred up the gospel music establishment. Angie and Debbie Winans yearn for what Angie calls "spiritual warfare," so much so that they have turned their backs on the musical establishment.

Angie and Debbie began their singing careers as back-

continued on page 37

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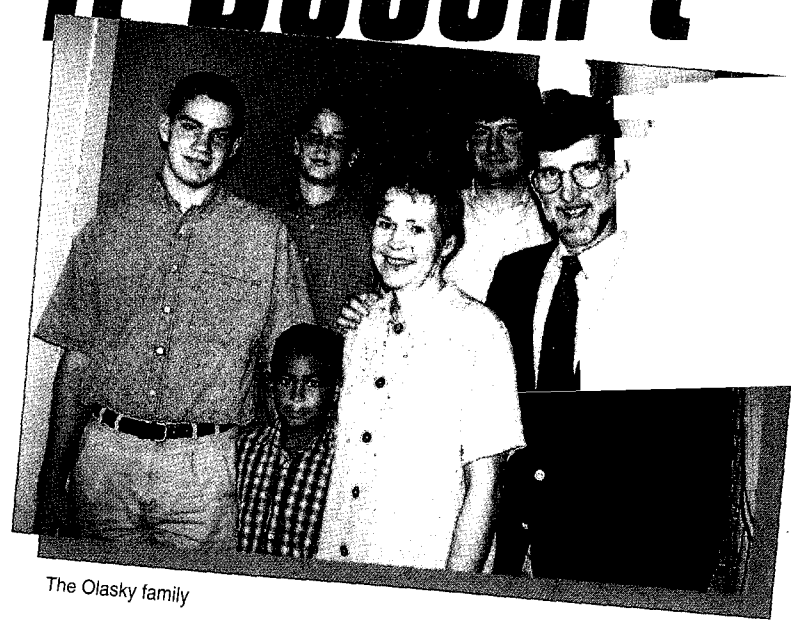
Americans living in mixed-race families explain...

When Race Matters & When it Doesn't



The Olasky family

Betty House

MARVIN OLASKY

I, like many traditional liberals and modern conservatives, enjoy quoting Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous statement stressing the content of our character, not the color of our skin. When confronted with forms asking for information about myself including race, I often leave the color line blank: That doesn't matter, I mutter.

True, true, all true: Color should not matter, and it usually does not. But when I talk with my seven-year-old son, who is related to me by love but not by genes, suddenly it does, a little. My three older sons, born to my wife and myself, are white; my youngest, Benjamin, whom we adopted when he was three weeks old, is black. And sometimes we are now forced to acknowledge the impossibility of complete colorblindness.

That's because Ben has become color-aware over the past year. When we go to a basketball game, he'll comment on how almost all the players have brown skin, like his. At a University of Texas baseball game, he'll comment that only a couple of players are brown, and almost all the fans have white skin. Knowing that he noticed, I commented after church last Sunday that another brown-skinned child joined him in the 20-child choir that morning. Ben instantly gave me the racial breakdown of the entire church that he had observed from his vantage point on the stage: Exactly six brown people and a dozen Asians among the 300 or so gathered for worship.

Where did this racial sensitivity come from? I feel like one of those thoroughly progressive, unisex-desiring dads who gives his son a doll to play with and watches as the boy turns the doll into a dive-bombing airplane. My wife Susan and I had largely ignored race in our early raising of Ben, and I don't think our older children brought it up either.

Part of Ben's growing attention to race may have come from his first-time exposure to school this past year. He certainly had his consciousness raised when my family and I were among the few conservatives at Renaissance Weekend, the Clinton New Year talkfest—he came back from one session for children wanting to know the exact proportions of his genetic background: one-half this, one-quarter that, and so on.

But his interest preceded these experiences, and I think it came from inside: As he realized that he is not the center of the universe and also began to separate himself from Mom and me, he wanted to know, Who am I? Ben started by looking at himself in the mirror and then looked at other people with a similar color. In the mostly black neighborhood we lived in for many years he noticed people who looked like him marking up walls and asked my wife, Why is it always brown-skinned people who do graffiti? To counter his assumption, we made sure he met doctors and librarians with brown skin.

Ben is positive about the person he sees in the mirror. He knows that Susan and I and his brothers love him. There's a special kind of satisfaction that we gain from him. Children born to parents are great causes of satisfaction, because parents know that through God's kindness they have brought into the world unique and wonderful creatures. But I know the life Benjamin most likely would have led in Washington, D.C., had he not been adopted. I've seen children not much older than he already employed as drug runners. It's not often in life that a person can feel, through God's grace, like a catcher in the rye.

I won't tell Ben about that particular satisfaction until he is much older. From early on, though, he has known about his adop-

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tion. Ben knows that his birthmother loved him but was very young and could not take care of him; so she wanted him to be in a family with a daddy and a mommy and brothers. He knows how excited we all were when we saw him for the first time at the adoption agency in Maryland and fed him and wrapped him up and took him home. He knows that adoption is a very positive word, because the Bible declares repeatedly that God adopts believers and takes them into His family. Adoption does not seem to be an issue in Ben's mind right now, but race is. Ben has never asked how many adopted people there are, but he asked last week whether there were more brown or white people in the world.

I doubt if Ben, as a member of a racial minority in this country, will ever be colorblind. That's not surprising: Minorities notice things in a way majorities do not. My liberal colleagues at the University of Texas often do not recognize their biases; I, a conservative, a member of a minority, do. I still heartily dislike the "It's a black thing, you wouldn't understand" T-shirts that assume that skin color controls consciousness, but I know that when a black student makes a comment in my class, other black students are likely to listen more intently than they would if the speaker were white.

None of this has turned me into a proponent of affirmative action. Sure, it would be nice to have more people whose skin looks like Ben's in responsible positions of all kinds. But thinking of my son's welfare has also made me toughen my position on quotas. Ben needs to learn the value of hard work and self-reliance, and anything that makes him think there is another path to success will harm him. People cannot be colorblind, but governments in their official actions should be.

After all, living in a multi-ethnic family makes all of us aware of the complexity of history. My children have Jewish, English, Scottish, and African ancestors. Should the English genes pay reparations to the discriminated-against Jewish genes? How do we figure out the benefits that newly immigrated sweatshop workers in 1910 derived from oppressing blacks? I do not want my family divided against itself by government-mandated racial preferences regarding jobs and scholarships. Nor do I want my country to be a house divided.

The good news, as Ben develops intellectually and morally, is that we see before our eyes a better way for racial advancement than official preferences. T. S. Eliot once said, "Do we want a wool sweater? We need to plant the grass to feed the sheep to get the wool to make a sweater." If we plant the right sort of grass now for children like Ben—good churches, good schools, two-parent families—progress will come.

Ben will always notice race. There's a touching scene in an otherwise mediocre movie called *Losing Isaiah* in which a very small black boy, adopted, puts his hand inside the hand of his older sister, white. She, knowingly, asks him to identify the difference, and he responds, "My hand's smaller." That's Ben several years ago. But last week, when I told him about that scene as our hands were together while reading a bedtime story, he said, "There's another difference." Knowing he's not colorblind, I said, "That's true. Yours is brown, mine is white." Ben responded, "That doesn't matter." Knowing he wasn't telling the whole truth, I asked, "Not at all?" He grinned, recognizing that he had been found out, and said, "Only a little."

Marvin Olasky is a professor at the University of Texas at Austin and the editor of World, *a weekly news magazine from a Christian perspective.*

HENDRIK MILLS

I guess I qualify as a member of a multi-cultural family. My own ancestry stems from the British Isles, my wife's equally from China and from the British Isles. Our two birth children are a quarter Chinese. Our adopted daughter is African American.

I spent nine years of my childhood in southern India and still read and speak Tamil (rustily). I have Mexican immigrant in-laws on my wife's side, and my adopted sister is African American. My aunt married a black man in the 1960s, and their three "mulatto" children (their word, not mine) are my first cousins.

My wife and I speak Spanish, and I teach it in a high school. We are hosting an exchange student from the Canary Islands this year. Back in the 1970s and early '80s my activities as a radical leftist took me into underclass urban neighborhoods on a daily basis. More recently, my family and I lived for three years on an Indian reservation. If you can find a more richly experienced cultural nomad, then skip this essay and read his.

People can't be colorblind, but governments in their official actions should be.

One naturally assumes that links exist between race and culture. How could there not be? But certainly many exceptions abound. Who really lived the American Dream—Anglo-Saxon me, spouting Marxist ideology in my twenties, or my wife's grandfather, Ako Wong, who in his twenties was working hard in Honolulu, saving up money to bring over a bride from China to start a family with? Young Ako Wong certainly did more to build this country's marrow than I did as a young man.

When I first married my wife in 1975, Gung-gung (the Chinese term for "grandpa," as we knew him) used to tell me in his broken English how he never missed a day of work in over 40 years—making the rounds of Chinese mom-and-pop stores as a sales agent for a food wholesaler. His vice was gambling, and he contracted large gambling debts in the early days while his wife was having their eight children. But Ako Wong was an honorable man; he worked hard, paid off his debts, raised his kids, and sent all of them to college. Ako and Sui Chock Wong were married for life, come what may. Their oldest daughter became an English teacher and married a future philosophy professor from Kokomo. They in turn had five daughters, the fourth of whom became my wife.

Though the tendrils of our family tree touch many lands, the roots grow in quintessentially American soil. The family's successes grew out of hard work, devoted marriages, careful saving and investing, and some strict upbringings. Those universals, and not any racial or ethnic particularities, were the most important influences over the generations.

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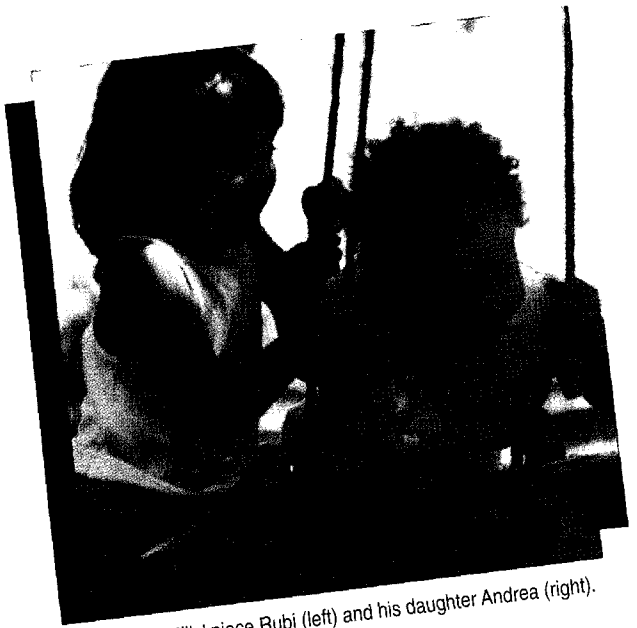

Hendrik Mills' niece Rubi (left) and his daughter Andrea (right).

Approximately mid-way through my expected lifespan, I can say that one important residue of all this experience with different places and races is a profound appreciation for the spiritual and cultural values that make up the foundation of Western civilization. It is not narrow prejudice or ignorance (as liberals would have it) that causes me to recognize the pre-eminence of Euro-American traditions in producing both material progress and human liberty.

Loving these Anglo-Saxon, Judeo-Christian traditions doesn't make me want to shun contact with the many other nations, languages, and cultures that make up the world. I support the proposal that all children in the U.S. should learn to be fluent in standard English. But that does not prevent me from enjoying a day of playing basketball, drinking beer, harvesting edible cactus, and speaking Spanish with my green-card-carrying brother-in-law and his friends and cousins when we visit southern California.

Both of my brothers were born in south India, one in a rat-infested bedroom owned by an Indian medical doctor who was (and still is) part of a collective, charitable effort known as the Christian Medical Fellowship in Oddanchattram, Tamil Nadu, India. This organization was founded by an idealistic group of Indian medical students, Christians, who were inspired by an American missionary from Minnesota to take their skills to an impoverished rural area where they created, starting with virtually nothing, a hospital and nursing school to serve their fellow Indians. I had my tonsils and adenoids removed there in 1971; the accommodations were spartan, but they got the job done safely for a tiny fraction of the cost of a similar operation here in the States.

This hospital, now a booming success and a vibrant center of Christianity as well as health care, is the kind of example I grew up with in India—proving that, yes, Christian and Western values do improve people's lives. But proving also that it doesn't take a white man to bring those ideas alive and successfully put them into practice.

That is also, in a nutshell, the example America offers the world: Ideas and principles are what really matters—and sound ideas can be put into practice by any, and every, race.

Hendrik Mills is a frequent contributor to The American Enterprise.

MICHAEL W. LYNCH

"Keep hanging out with him, and you might find a bullet in your back," warned a well-dressed black man in New York's Times Square. Diana, then my girlfriend of only a few months, turned around horrified. I stood paralyzed as I watched him "school" her on the importance of racial solidarity. He continued: "Brothas around here pack .38s." I shouldn't have been shocked, as this was only a little more extreme than the normal fare. Soon after we started dating, I began to expect drunken serenades of the theme song from filmmaker Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever* as we enjoyed nights out on the town. And that was in generally tolerant Seattle in the early-1990s.

It's true: Race matters on the streets of America's cities, especially when the races are black (Diana's) and white (mine). Race also matters in America's homes—at least in ours, at least in some ways, at least for a while.

Race matters more for my wife than for me. We are professionals, and thus able to insulate ourselves from the harsher elements of society. Still, race often becomes an unavoidable issue.

One of our longstanding jokes, shared by Diana's family, is my quip to a rude waiter. "Treat us like white folks," I said, after getting snubbed one time too many. One thing about race that white folks who complain about whiney blacks don't often understand: When race is involved, it's hard to know whether slights are intentional or not. Was the waiter just an ass, or was he a "racist" ass? It's impossible to be certain. If one looks for it, race can be seen everywhere.

Despite the little personal bumps, *institutionally* race seems to matter little in our lives. Readers would be hard pressed to racially peg our educational pedigrees. Diana attended a private high school, spent a year in England before attending Georgetown, after which she earned a masters in English at the University of Washington. She then headed to Stanford for its doctoral program in English. I attended public high school and went on to two years at U.C. Santa Cruz before transferring to the University of Washington. When it came time for graduate school, I picked up prerequisites at San Francisco City College and completed my masters in economics from San Francisco State University.

But this too could be explained through a racial lens. Diana attended private high school, at great expense, only after public school became unbearable for an academic achiever who hap-

The Dissolving Color Line

"THE DISSOLUTION OF THE COLOR LINE is already happening, in interracial marriages and adoptions, in polling booths, in the unexpected resonance of Tiger Woods's 'Cablinasian' handle, in popular culture. The ground is shifting under our feet. We should embrace the fact that it's happening. We shouldn't fear that if race lost all its value as a distinction among people we would suddenly have nothing to share. Human beings are deeper and more protean than that. And the development of an American civilization or culture worthy of that depth depends on our letting go of race as its organizing principle."

—Jim Sleeper, author of Liberal Racism, *from an interview with* The Atlantic Unbound.

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pened to be black. Doing homework does not make one white—but that's not the view on the street. And private credentials don't come cheap. Diana's high school, for which she only recently paid off the last loans, probably cost more than my college.

Housing discrimination has not been a problem thus far. We returned from our honeymoon to an apartment in Virginia, the state whose antimiscegenation law was struck down by the U. S. Supreme Court in *Loving v. Virginia* in 1967, just two years before my birth. The neighbors, with few exceptions, aren't friendly. But in this instance we know its not race. Northern Virginians just aren't friendly.

Professionally, race so far has not proved an impediment. I have always worked in conservative/libertarian organizations—Diana has been working towards a Ph.D. in American literature. Diana has always accompanied me to work-related social events, and the guests as well as staff have always been polite, though no doubt some of the elders may disapprove. But I don't care if people with whom I have no relationship approve of my life. I don't care what they think about the choices I make. I don't even care what they say behind my back. I only care how they act, especially towards Diana. And among the cultured classes, it's no longer acceptable to act racist or voice racist opinions.

Our chosen fields, however, have presented challenges in another way. A signature-gatherer for the California Civil Rights Initiative told me that he once approached an interracial couple for support. When he explained that the initiative would essentially end much of what travels under the banner of affirmative action, the woman, who was black, upbraided him for his racial insensitivity. Her partner, a white man, eagerly signed the petition. The couple walked away arguing, while their child learned an early lesson on America's color divide.

Diana and I find ourselves similarly situated. Our crisis came when I appeared on a special news segment on affirmative action on a San Francisco television station. Diana and I had agreed to disagree on the subject, but her graduate student friends—and professors—had no idea that I was so backward as to think that the government had no business making distinctions based on race. One of Diana's friends caught my appearance and the phone tree started. I arrived home to a devastated Diana, who was being consoled by a friend who has been active in radical politics in the Bay Area since the 1960s. Relationships require compromise and the solution was apparent. I no longer debate the merits of affirmative action on television.

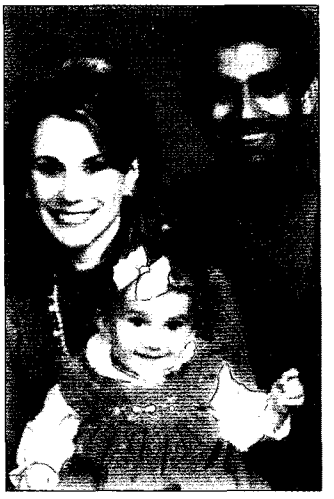
Even in this instance, though, race can be viewed as a secondary issue, the primary one being the politics of universities. Even if Diana were white, her academic friends would have been horrified that she was involved with someone who opposed affirmative action, which in a humanities department is the equivalent of a Catholic opposing communion. That she is black only intensified the situation.

Still, I am a racial optimist. This short list of annoyances—even though some were quite traumatic at the time—is a testament to progress in a country where not long ago a black man might pay with his life for daring to date a white woman. And from even the most unpleasant experiences, productive lessons often emerge.

After my television appearance, for example, the initial shock among Diana's friends gave way to discussion over a period of years. Nobody's political position has changed, but I believe that we all have a richer understanding of how the other side of the debate views the issue. Most people live in ideological echo chambers. At a safe distance, people can take comfort in their notions about what other people think, why they think it, and why they are misguided. But it is when we rub up against each other, even if it entails some occasional tears and screaming, that we really learn. This is the stuff of which strong fabrics are woven.

Michael W. Lynch is Washington editor of Reason.

DINESH D'SOUZA



A few months ago, a colleague who works at a Washington, D.C. research foundation asked me whether I considered my two-year-old daughter, who has a white mother and an East Indian dad, to be "white" or "Asian." Neither, I replied. "She's beyond racial classification."

"Not according to the U.S. government," my policy-wonk friend retorted.

He was right. I called the Census Bureau and was informed that little Danielle should be listed as "white," because mixed-race children are expected to take the race of their mother.

"You mean," I said, "if her father were white and her mother were Indian, she would be classified instead as Asian?"

"Exactly," the Census official replied, adding in a low voice, "You see, in these kinds of cases we know the mother's background, but we cannot always identify the father."

In the case of Susan Graham, you can see where this leads. A white woman married to a black man in Roswell, Georgia, Graham reports that although the Census Bureau counts her children as white, at her son's public school the teacher was asked to classify the child based upon appearance and decided that he was black. Graham sighs, "My child has been white on the United States Census, black at school, and multiracial at home—all at the same time." Bizarre.

For a generation now the U.S. government has been classifying citizens by skin color, a measure necessary to implement affirmative action programs, which affect public hiring, university admissions, contracting and set-asides, even the shape of racially gerrymandered voting districts.

Now for the first time, these official classifications are coming under serious challenge—from scholars who regard

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them as scientifically bogus, from parents of mixed-race children who refuse to make them choose between competing categories, and from citizens who have grown exasperated with the practice of allocating government benefits and privileges on the basis of pigmentation.

Despite their familiarity, consider how inappropriate today's official racial categories are. So-called Asians aren't a racial group; rather, the term is a continental description for such racially and culturally disparate peoples as the light-skinned Chinese and the dark-skinned Pakistanis. "Hispanic" too is not a racial but a linguistic classification, which refers to Spanish-speaking people of white, black, and Indian heritage.

"Black" seems a comparatively clear category, but it is no less dubious. Biologists tell us that the overwhelming majority of African Americans have both black and white heritage. So why are persons like Whitney Houston and Jesse Jackson, despite their mixed ancestry, automatically classified as black?

Segregation institutionalized the infamous "one-drop rule," according to which a person was considered black if he possessed any evident trace of black ancestry. Amazingly, the rules developed by slaveowners and segregationists to define sharp lines of demarcation between the races are the *same* rules used by government agencies to classify American citizens today.

Now as before, racial classification is the servant of state-sponsored discrimination, in the form of affirmative action programs. That is why, when the Census Bureau conducts hearings on whether it should stop categorizing citizens by color, the groups lined up in opposition are not skinheads and the Ku Klux Klan but rather mainstream civil rights groups. These groups are concerned that without racial classification it would be impossible to maintain racial preferences in government policy.

Since jobs and benefits worth hundreds of millions of dollars are at stake, racial scams like the affirmative action contracts that regularly go to the fellow who looks like a white guy but is officially considered a person of color because he claims to have 1/64th Cherokee Indian ancestry, have become commonplace. Nobody has dared go after this person's scalp because the bureaucrats fear it would expose the ambiguity of their racial classifications.

The Arab American Institute now insists that citizens of Middle Eastern descent, who are currently counted as white, be given a separate affirmative action category of their own. And in the latest comic twist, Hawaiian groups have demanded that Hawaiians be removed from the Asian/Pacific Islanders category and reclassified as American Indians. Lots of anthropological sophistry is invoked to prove that the Hawaiians didn't really emigrate to this continent from Asia, but what's actually at stake are gambling privileges currently available to American Indians and not to Asians and Pacific Islanders.

Whatever the past justification for racial classification and preference systems, it should be apparent that in a multiracial America, such schemes are bound to break down, often in ugly ways. It makes no sense to force new generations of mixed-race Americans into official racial categories. In so doing we run the risk of developing our own version of the Nuremberg laws and thus inviting a grim future of balkanization and ethnic conflict.

The alternative is to recognize that race is morally irrelevant and to insist upon a regime in which citizens are equal before the law. For this to happen, the government must stop classifying and granting preferences on the basis of skin color.

Dinesh D'Souza is John M. Olin scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and author of The End of Racism. *This is adapted from an essay published in* The Weekly Standard.

Twisting & Turning on the Road to Colorblindness

By Deroy Murdock

THE ROAD TO COLORBLINDNESS is as colorful as ever. While recent court decisions and pending ballot measures cheer those who want government to stop fretting about its citizens' pigmentation, evidence abounds that bureaucrats remain enamored of racial calculus.

Take the Seattle Public School District. It asks potential employees to complete a form that seems to have been written by curators at an anthropology museum. It's designed to foster "an ethnic configuration, both male and female, that reflects the multiracial characteristics of the student population."

The form instructs applicants to "select from below the one most appropriate racial/ethnic group with which you choose to be identified." It then offers 18 different "permissible codes," each beside a check-off box. These racial labels include that perennial favorite, "White," grouped with "Gypsy." The latter is defined tautologically as "a person having origins in the original Gypsy groups of Europe." Other codes include "Alaskan Native," "East Indian" (covering those from India, Ceylon, and, "in some cases, Pakistan") and "Latino White" which involves Latinos with roots in "North Africa, the Middle East or the Indian subcontinent." Perhaps Seattle offers a support group for Latino-Middle-Eastern-Americans.

This document slides from the silly to the sinister when applicants resist being shoehorned into these boxes. They may describe their ethnicity in the comment section. Then, the form explains, "a member of the Personnel Department will assign one of the racial/ethnic codes to you based on his or her best judgment."

There's a whiff of Nuremberg about all this. The notion of public employees subjecting job applicants to racial inspections should give Americans goosebumps. So it goes when government substitutes group identity for individual equality before the law.

This November, Seattle voters could ditch those racial boxes for good by passing the Washington Civil Rights Initiative.

On this score, Americans could learn a lesson from Russia. As E. V. Kontorovich reported in the *Wall Street Journal*, the Kremlin last fall stopped identifying its citizens as members of the Tatar, Chukchi, and 101 other Stalinist ethnic categories. National ID cards now let Russians be Russians.

In 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. dreamed out loud about a place where his children would "be judged by the content of their character, not the color of their skin." As with *Sputnik*'s trip to space, Russia got there first.

Deroy Murdock is a New York City writer and commentator.

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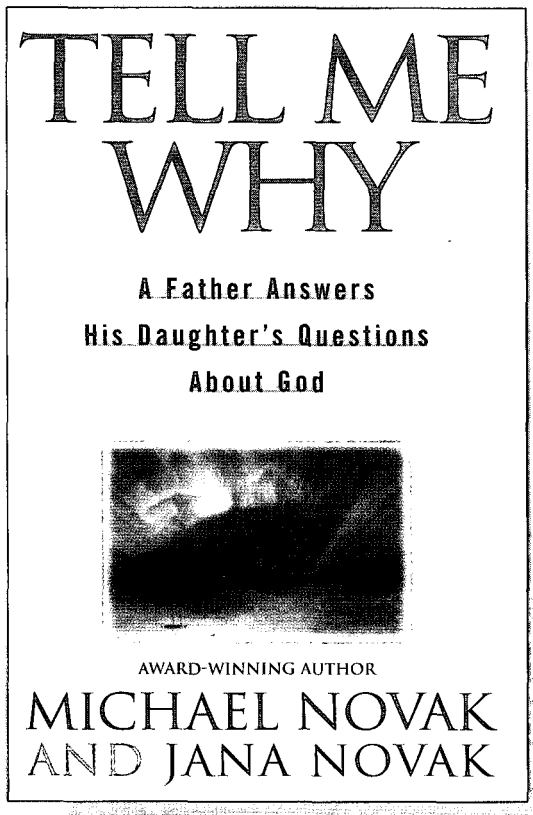

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The hate that dare not speak its name

Black Racism

By Ying Ma

In what passes for discussions on race these days, small problems are often blown up large, while *real* traumas are completely ignored. For instance, despite what President Clinton's "Race Initiative" panel has said, the very rawest racial conflicts in present-day America don't even fit into the tidy mold of white-majority-oppressing-colored-minority that activists constantly promote. Though civil rights groups and most of the media studiously ignore this fact, the nation's most fractious racial battles are now conflicts *between* minority populations. Particularly horrific is the animosity directed at Asian Americans by blacks in low-income areas of urban America.

At age ten, I immigrated from China to Oakland, California, a city filled with crime, poverty, and racial tension. In elementary school, I didn't wear name-brand clothing or speak English. My name soon became "Ching Chong," "Chinagirl," and "Chow Mein." Other children laughed at my language, my culture, my ethnicity, and my race. I said nothing.

After a few years, I began to speak English, but not well enough to trade racial insults. On rides home from school I avoided the back of the bus so as not to be beaten up. But even when I sat in the front, fire crackers, paper balls, small rocks, and profanity were thrown at me and the other "stupid Chinamen." The label "Chinamen" was dished out indiscriminately to Vietnamese, Koreans, and other Asians. When I looked around, I saw that the other "Chinamen" tuned out the insults by eagerly discussing movies, friends, and school.

During my secondary school years, racism, and then the combination of outrage and bitterness that it fosters, accompanied me home on the bus every day. My English was by now more fluent than that of those who insulted me, but most of the time I still said nothing to avoid being beaten up. In addition to everything else thrown at me, a few times a week I was the target of sexual remarks vulgar enough to make Howard Stern blush. When I did respond to the insults, I immediately faced physical threats or attacks, along with the embarrassing fact that the other "Chinamen" around me simply continued their quiet personal conversations without intervening. The reality was that those who cursed my race and ethnicity were far bigger in size than most of the Asian children who sat silently.

The racial harassment wasn't limited to bus rides. It surfaced in my high school cafeteria, where a middle-aged Chinese vendor who spoke broken English was told by rowdy students each day at lunch time to "Hurry up, you dumb Ching!" On the sidewalks, black teenagers and adults would creep up behind 80-year-old Asians and frighten them with sing-song nonsense: "Yee-ya, Ching-chong, ah-ee, un-yahhh!" At markets and in the streets of poor black neighborhoods, Asians would be told, "Why the hell don't you just go back to where you came from!"

When it came time for college, I left this ugly world for a beautiful school far away. Finally, it was possible to pursue a life without racial harassment backed by the threat of violence. I chose not to return to my old neighborhood after college, but I am often reminded of the racial discrimination I endured there. On a bus not too long ago I saw a black woman curse at a Korean man, "You f---ing Chinese person! Didn't you hear that I asked you to move yo' ass? You too stupid to understand English or something?"

In poor neighborhoods across this country Asians endure daily racial hatred just as I did. Because of their language deficiencies, their small size, their fear of violent confrontations, they endure in silence. Unlike me, many of them will never depart for a new life in a beautiful place far, far away. So each day they grow more bitter against a group that much of America refuses to acknowledge to be capable of racism: African Americans.

In a fair and peaceful world, racial harassment will be decried without regard to its source. The problem today is that prominent black leaders rule out even the possibility of black racism. Activists like Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson intone that racism equals "prejudice plus power," and that since blacks in America lack power, they are simply not capable of practicing racism against anyone. John Hope Franklin, chair of President Clinton's race panel, angrily insists that racism is something suffered, not dished out, by blacks. Many black professors, writers, polemicists, and politicians repeat the same mantra. What might appear to be

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black racism, writes syndicated columnist Leonard Pitts, actually boils down not to racism but to acts of crime and rudeness from the perpetrators, and tough luck for the recipients.

Rationalizers of black racism ignore the fact that identical actions inflicted by whites would be universally decried as intolerable. Ultimately, their arguments simply grease the skids for further traumatizing of "unlucky" victims. And to real-life casualties of racial animosity, motivation is not especially relevant. Loss is loss. Pain is pain.

Unfortunately, Asian Americans—and especially their leaders—have failed to speak out on this matter. Complaints from wounded individuals regularly boil into public view, however. In mid-August, I attended a crowded press conference held in New York's Chinatown to discuss Indonesia's history of discrimination against ethnic Chinese (which peaked this May in a wave of bloody anti-Chinese riots). One woman at the event began to hysterically scream out her frustrations over black American racism against Asians. The woman, Mee Ying Lin, shouted, "Chinese suffer from racial discrimination by blacks every day. We should help persecuted Chinese overseas, but why is no one dealing with our own troubles in America?"

Rose Tsai, head of the San Francisco Neighbors Association, and candidate for a seat on the city's Board of Supervisors, suggests that everyday Asians rarely defend themselves against ghetto racism because "Asian culture is just not that confrontational.... Asians are unlike blacks who got to where they are in politics by being militant."

Tsai explains that Asian involvement in politics is at a nascent stage, that it is difficult for her organization even to convince Asian immigrants to vote, let alone make a political stink against racial harassment. "Asians are just not used to standing up for our own rights," says another Bay Area Chinese activist with frustration.

That might explain the quiescence of recent immigrants who speak imperfect English. But what about the growing cadre of Asian activists? They are far from passive or non-confrontational. In just the past two years, organizations like the Asian American Legal Defense Fund, the National Asian-Pacific American Legal Consortium, the Organization for Chinese Americans, and others have voiced loud condemnations of "racism" in American society. But they have focused on events like the recent investigation of Asian donors of illegal campaign funds, the Republican opposition in Congress to Bill Lann Lee's nomination as director of the Office of Civil Rights, a cover drawing for *National Review* that showed the President, Vice President, and First Lady dressed in Manchurian garb, and even a recent cover photo for this magazine that showed a handsome Asian male scowling angrily at the camera.

If vocal Asian activists are able to work themselves into a frenzy attacking everyday political tussles and editorial cartoons for their alleged racist motivations, they are obviously capable of confrontation. Why then do we *never* hear these national activists condemning black racism against Asians in our inner cities?

Ying Ma, who immigrated to the United States in 1985, is a research associate at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York.

Gamma-Liaison/Jean-Marc Giboux

Looting in Koreatown during the L.A. riots.

Some Asian-American activists say the reason they have not confronted anti-Asian racism among blacks is because the tension does not exist on the national level, but is merely confined to some local areas. Karen Narasaki of the National Asian-Pacific American Legal Consortium claimed in a recent interview that black animosity is different in each city and ought to be handled differently in each case by local organizations. David Lee, executive director of one such local organization, the San Francisco Voters Education Committee, concurs: "There may be a few communities and a few areas where tensions exist—so it is better for community groups rather than a national organization like the Organization of Chinese Americans to deal with such problems."

Representatives of national Asian organizations also cite resource constraints to explain their quiescence. They say black-Asian clashes are not a serious enough national issue to expend scarce time and money on.

There is a difference, however, between not being able to expend effort and not wanting to. Asian activists on the national level also matter-of-factly justify black racism in inner cities as a direct result of competition between Asians and their black neighbors over limited economic resources. Narasaki, while acknowledging she is not an inner city expert, insists that many black and Asian conflicts "have to do with the lack of economic opportunities" in cities. Echoing this refrain, Stanley Mark, program director of the Asian American Legal Defense Fund, asserts that "we can't talk about race without talking about economic disparities."

In this vein, Asian activists consistently mention that racial problems occur when Asian merchants move into predominantly black neighborhoods and flourish. The vicious year-long black boycott of a Korean store in Brooklyn in 1990, and the looting and burning of Korean stores in south-central Los Angeles during the 1992 Rodney King riots serve as shining examples of conflicts linked to economic disparities.

The excuse of economic disparities fails miserably to justify violence and harassment, however. For some observers, it also brings up memories of Nazi persecution of Jews, African

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attacks on Indian merchants, and recent murders, rapes, and robberies of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia. All of these atrocities were committed against people deemed economically well off by larger masses facing difficult times.

In any case, the economic disparities rationale falls apart in the many instances where racism flourishes in the absence of class differences. At San Francisco's Hunter's Point public housing complex, for instance, low-income Southeast Asian residents, who are in the minority, have consistently encountered racial harassment from their black neighbors. Racial slurs, physical threats, violence, and destruction of property have festered for years. Philip Nguyen of the Southeast Asian Community Center, who has worked on the case for years, notes that there are no economic differences between the Asian and black families in the complex. The Asians, he says, are very quiet and have made every effort to befriend the black residents, yet serious friction has persisted for ten years.

Joe Hicks, executive director of the Los Angeles City Human Relations Commission, painstakingly tried to bring blacks and Asians together after the Rodney King riots. He believes that "much of the hostilities are due to blacks' jealousy of Asian economic success, a sense of alienation, and the self-perpetuating belief that blacks will always lose out in the racial equation in America." He adds that "certainly economics gives a basis to many of the problems," but asserts that "even if tomorrow we can have a level playing field for both racial groups, we would still have animosity and racial strife" because prejudices would still remain.

Asian activists who are not otherwise inclined to ignore prejudice are often strangely anxious to apologize for black racism. In interviews, they note that Asians harbor many prejudices against blacks too. This explanation, however, has no power to explain the kind of harassment I and many others like me experienced as young immigrant children beginning life with no animus toward anyone.

Asian prejudice toward blacks surely exists. But whatever biases might be harbored in the minds of Asian immigrants, many of whom had never seen a black person before arriving in the U.S., they certainly don't rate at the level of destroying black people's property, scaring their elderly folk, or threatening and assaulting their children—the kinds of pressures Asians in many urban areas now endure routinely. Asian youths in particular typically start out with little or no inclination to distrust or dislike African Americans. Young Asians are usually far more willing than their parents to accept a new country and new friends, including black ones. In many cases, it was only after innumerable frightening chases, assaults, and humiliations that Asian attitudes toward blacks turned defensive. Those of us whose open minds were confronted with hostility and hatred will never accept the insulting assertion that our suffering resulted from our own prejudices.

It seems that leaders of the Organization of Chinese Americans, the Asian American Legal Defense Fund, and related groups are disconnected from the real concerns of many of the Asians they claim to represent. David Lee, whose Bay Area organization is attempting to promote local dialogue among minority journalists, believes that a fundamental disconnection exists between the national Asian spokesmen and the new majority of Asians who are recent immigrants. The prominent Asian civil rights leaders, he notes, tend to be American born, to speak little of their ethnic languages, and to be unable to read the local ethnic newspapers. Many of them do not know or understand the problems in low income areas, because they live comfortable middle-class lives. And so "it is not surprising that they are silent about black-on-Asian discrimination," Lee summarizes.

Bong Hwan Kim, executive director of the Korean Youth and Community Center in Los Angeles and an active member of the Black-Korean Alliance that attempted to bring African- and Korean-Americans together in the eight years before the south-central riots, describes a disconnection in the Korean community between first-generation immigrants and acculturated second generation residents with less familiarity with inner-city life. After the shops of Koreatown were looted or burned, he reports, the more suburbanized Koreans pushed inter-ethnic bridge-building efforts, while the first-generation immigrants who toiled in menial jobs, bridled at having to sit across the table from those who looted and burned their property. Meanwhile, few of the prominent national Asian organizations even condemned the violence perpetrated against Koreans in L.A.

Stanley Mark of the Asian American Legal Defense Fund argues in defense of the national Asian organizations that people hear less from the Asian leaders about black-on-Asian racism than white-on-Asian racism simply because there is less of the former than the latter. Mark insists he knows of no case where an Asian was seriously hurt or killed by a racist black American.

Underlining the disconnect between national and local perceptions, Liu Yu-xi, an organizer of the New York coalition of Chinese Americans that mobilized hundreds of thousands of normally politically apathetic Chinese to protest Indonesian violence against Chinese residents, chuckled at Stanley Mark's ignorance of cases of black racism. Liu, who has known of many racially motivated physical attacks against Chinese in New York, observes, "Such crimes are reported often in the local Chinese papers, but the national Asian activists obviously do not know how to read Chinese."

When asked why prominent Asians have said little about racial harassment by African Americans, Bill Tam of San Francisco's Chinese Family Alliance flatly stated, "I think they are afraid to say anything." To him, it appears that Asian leaders are often fearful of the national black leadership. National Asian organizations generally follow the lead of black civil rights groups like the NAACP so slavishly, another Bay Area activist told me, that even when the latter's stances (for instance, on quotas and preferences) are opposed to the interests and beliefs of many Asian citizens, the Asian activists don't challenge their allies.

Rose Tsai of the San Francisco Neighbors Association was a little more blunt: "Most Asian leaders do not wish to acknowledge that there exists a problem because they do not want the minorities to fight amongst themselves." As a result, national Asian spokesmen speaking for their brethren are without any inkling of the real problems they face, or what kind of racism is dragging them down. Recognizing the complex issues between blacks and Asians, Philip Nguyen of the Southeast Asian Community Center has a simple proposal: "Fight, not against or for any group, but against racial discrimination."

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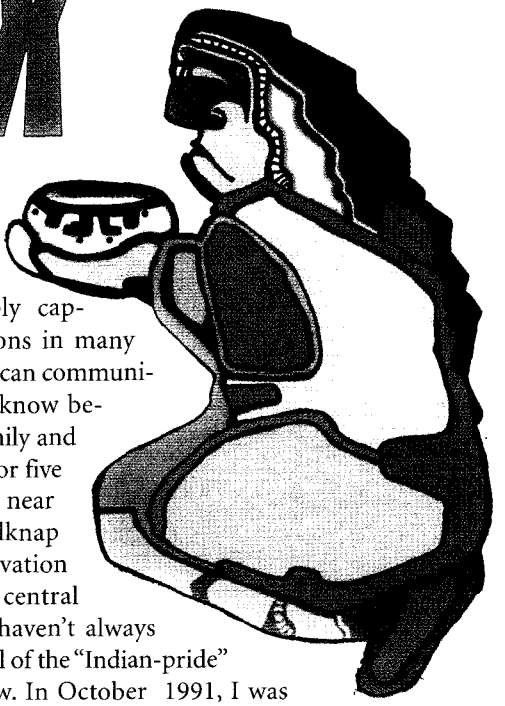
American Indians + Welfare State Liberalism =

A Deadly Mix

By Hendrik Mills



An article of faith among Indian activists and their liberal allies today is that any problems experienced by Native Americans are caused by their unjust, rapacious treatment at the hands of whites, including a continuing "cultural genocide." This victimology is reinforced by many romantic beliefs about Indians, including the conviction that they are less materialistic, more spiritual, more in tune with the earth and inclined to care for the environment than other Americans. These sorts of beliefs, widespread in areas distant from Indian country, have served to justify a great web of public programs for Native Americans.

Unfortunately, these seemingly generous programs have resulted, to a shocking degree, in social disintegration on the nation's reservations. That's because they are based on a false understanding of what the real obstacles to Indian progress and happiness are today.

Never mind "cultural genocide." A much more straightforward picture of the kinds of problems plaguing Native Americans today can be seen in a recent, sadly typical story from the Great Falls, Montana *Tribune*. It reported that a four-year-old Indian girl had been struck and killed by an auto at the intersection of Cheyenne Avenue and Dull Knife Drive in the town of Lame Deer. Speed was not a factor, and the 49-year-old woman driving the car was not to blame.

The first problem was that the four-year-old was not being escorted by any parent or other adult. She crossed the street alone while returning from a Boys & Girls Club she had visited with her brother and sister.

The second problem was that three broken street lights blackened the intersection. "It was dark," Highway Patrol officer Tim Lytle said. "Had the lights been working, it would have made a big difference." Area residents told Lytle that vandalism to street lights in the area was a recurring problem. The culprits? Indian juveniles.

The simple elements of this tragic story—crime, and a lack of parental supervision and involvement with children, resulting in premature death—crisply capture conditions in many Native American communities today. I know because my family and I have lived for five years on and near the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in north central Montana. I haven't always been skeptical of the "Indian-pride" point of view. In October 1991, I was one of those protesting against Columbus Day at a rally in downtown Denver sponsored by the American Indian Movement. When my wife and I initially decided to move to, and work in, Indian country, it was because we sympathized with Native American claims.

Initially, it was the goings-on in the schools here in Harlem, Montana, that forced me to re-examine my beliefs. Until the 1970s, white and Indian children had peaceably attended these schools together and had received solid educations. But in recent years, the local schools have been plagued by indiscipline, violence, and drastically lowered academic standards. Only a few local white parents still have their children in Harlem public schools. Instead they drive them daily to neighboring towns where they attend public schools in which discipline and the work ethic are still intact. As I began to investigate, I met former teachers who told horror stories of Indian parents coming into the school to curse at teachers because their child had been assigned "too much homework" or had been disciplined for fighting in school. Parents told me of racially motivated playground and street violence against their children.

How could this have happened? It was in answering that question that my radical-leftist illusions began to die. I queried

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many residents of our area, both old-timers and young, Indian and non-Indian, on and off the reservation. I read widely, including *Indian Country Today*, a national Indian newspaper, and other writings by Indians, as well as many other books and journals. And I discovered it was my own generation that, in the 1960s, set in motion the processes of racial separatism and social and economic change that ultimately resulted in the chaotic schools and other social failures in Indian country.

The main demands of Indian militants and their political allies since the 1960s have been: (1) enlargement of the reservations; (2) federal dollars to remedy unemployment and poverty on the reservations; (3) recognition of Native American sovereignty (the idea that each reservation is a self-determining nation); and (4) official support for an Indian culture separate from the rest of America. Only the first demand has been largely denied.

The request for federal funds has been granted in spades. It is widely believed that Native Americans have been forgotten and impoverished by the actions—or inaction—of mainstream America. In fact, present-day Indians are surrounded by a cradle-to-grave system of benefits enjoyed by no other racial group in America. The U.S. Indian Health Service provides free health care with no co-payment whatever to all Indians living on or near reservations—everything from filling cavities, to intensive care after a heart attack, to reconstructing facial contours injured in a barroom brawl. Through the Department of Education's "impact aid" program, school districts with a large number of Indians receive millions of dollars of extra annual aid, to cover everything from routine operating expenses to the running of bilingual Indian-language programs. The "impact aid" program doesn't just fill the coffers of the school district, it also mandates that the local tribal council must agree to the school district's budget in order for the federal money to be granted.

Tribal colleges, set up on almost every reservation, provide two-year community college curricula right where the students are. Scholarships and living stipends are the rule, not the exception, for Indian students attending tribal colleges.

"Treaty money"—a lump sum often exceeding $10,000—is given to Indian youngsters of many tribes when they reach the age of majority. This is justified as a settlement of various historic claims that activists, beginning in the 1960s, asserted against the U.S. government.

Indians who live and work on reservations here in Montana are also exempt from many kinds of taxes: new-vehicle licensing taxes, county taxes, state income tax, and in some cases federal income tax. Gambling laws that ban or restrict casinos off-reservation often do not apply on the reservation, which is why there has been an explosive growth of Indian gambling casinos.

Head Start is a fixture on all reservations, providing federally funded child care for every Indian child, as well as an array of health care, feeding, and educational services. Welfare is freely available; the Montana state welfare authorities recently announced that all Indians on reservations in Montana would fall under the "hardship exemption" to the recent welfare reform law, thereby exempting them from the law's work requirements.

Many other programs likewise transfer cash, goods, and services to Native Americans. Back when many of the government Indian programs were begun in the 1970s, there was a great increase in the number of self-described Native Americans; so the U.S. government instituted the "1/8 rule" to determine who would be eligible for federal benefits. This rule states that a person who possesses at least "1/8 blood quantum" is an Indian, and Indians are issued wallet-sized cards specifying their blood quantum, e.g. "3/16 Assiniboin, 5/32 Gros Ventre." Nowhere, therefore, is the linkage between race and government payoffs more mechanistic, strained, and ultimately harmful than it is for Indians.

Pitiful stories of Indian poverty are often told to support continued expansion of government programs. But lack of money is not the main component of Indian poverty today. The owner of a taxi service in Havre told me and my co-workers one day that he gets a lot of business from Indians on the first day of every month, when welfare checks arrive. Someone asked, "Are they going to the grocery store to buy food?" He replied, "No, most want rides to the casinos."

At the local dump, one can regularly see discarded food thrown away by people who are supposedly in dire need. Fruit juice, canned fruit, macaroni, soup, rice, and beans are sometimes thrown by the case into municipal dumpsters by Indians who are allegedly so poor their children must be given extra tax-subsidized meals at school. The source of these discarded groceries is a U.S. Department of Agriculture "surplus" food distribution program that operates on reservations. Improvidence of this sort makes it impossible to solve Indians' problems by transferring resources to them.

Since the 1960s, government has taken on many of the traditional functions of parents on the Indian reservations. Many mothers and fathers have willingly ceded responsibility for their offspring to this rich uncle. An Indian Health Service dentist I know tells of parents bringing in pre-school children with their entire set of teeth rotted at the gumline. When the dentist asks them whether they have followed the advice given in every clinic not to leave a baby alone in a crib with a bottle of milk or soda pop propped before him, the parents sometimes respond, "You fix his teeth; that's *your* job!" Books and even toys are scarce in most reservation homes, but junk food and television are omnipresent.

Thanks to the progressive disintegration of the Indian family, parental negligence makes some children *de facto* orphans. An elementary school principal who works in Indian country told me about a little girl who came to school on a Monday morning with a staple embedded in her hand and an infection already begun. He had the staple removed and the infection treated by the Indian Health Service. He found out it had been in her hand all weekend, and no caring adult had been present in her home.

In the worst homes, Indian children are growing up without ever being socialized to acceptable norms. These are the promiscuous teenagers who produce fetal-alcohol afflicted babies.

Hendrik Mills is a Montana writer and school teacher with extensive experience on Indian reservations.

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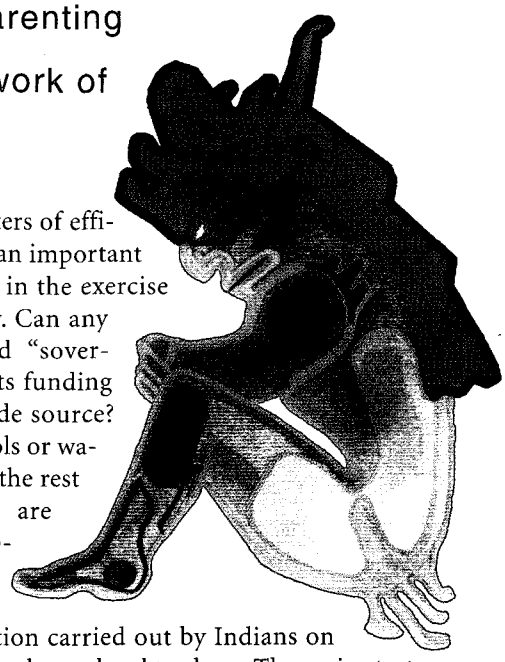
Large numbers of Indian parents have abdicated their parenting responsibilities. This is linked to the comprehensive network of services provided by the government.



These are the young men who steal insulin syringes from their grandparents (a recurring problem on the nearby reservation) so they can shoot up the drug "crank." Crime, including murder and assault, is a serious problem in Indian country. While gang activity is growing, crime rates on reservations and nearby towns are typically two or three times as high as in non-Indian areas.

In many Indian extended families today, several serious older people are the only remaining source of cohesion. Grandmothers raising babies are now a common sight in Indian country, as fathers and mothers go to jail, wallow in crank or alcohol, and forget about their offspring.

Ironically, the many orphans and near-orphans in Indian country cannot be adopted by non-Indian families—due to a federal law intended to protect Indian children from cultural assimilation. This disastrous provision, the Indian Child Welfare Act, should be scrapped as soon as possible, so that the underage victims of rampant social decay can find stable and loving homes elsewhere.

There are bright spots. Responsible parenting seems to run in certain families on the Indian reservations. The Indians who operate working ranches or farms often seem to turn out successful children. In those households, children are given responsibilities and hard work from an early age, and they learn useful, satisfying skills. But the consensus in Indian country is that large numbers of Indian parents have abdicated their parenting responsibilities. In my opinion, this is linked to the comprehensive network of services provided by the government.

The activist demand for recognition of Indian sovereignty has been granted to a very significant degree in the last couple of decades. A reservation with a population well under 10,000 typically has dozens of tribal government positions that pay annual salaries in the $30,000-50,000 range. Unless you've lived and contended with these independent tribal bureaucracies, you can scarely imagine how inefficient they are. I wonder if Third World dictatorships have as many paper-shufflers presiding over so little economic activity.

One example may suffice: In 1996 our local tribal council flexed its sovereign muscles and imposed the so-called Tribal Employment Rights Organization Tax, a per-capita levy on every non-Indian working, even temporarily, on the reservation. A Montana road crew, repairing the main paved artery through the reservation at no cost to the reservation, was kept from working because they employed some non-Indians, and the state balked at paying for the privilege of repairing the reservation's road. The telephone company was held up in its attempt to install new phone lines to Indian residences because its linemen were non-Indian. Trucks delivering goods to Indian-owned stores on the reservation refused to pay the tax, and so delivery to these stores was delayed. I could tell many other similar stories of the accomplishments of the sovereign tribal governments.

Aside from matters of efficiency, there remains an important question of principle in the exercise of Indian sovereignty. Can any group be considered "sovereign" when most of its funding comes from an outside source? When sewers or schools or water plants are built in the rest of America, they are funded by local property tax levies. But there is relatively little economic production carried out by Indians on reservations, thus scarcely any local tax base. The main strategy for raising money followed by the tribal councils and the reservation school districts is simply to lobby the federal government. Many Indians have become quite adept at this, and the public opinion campaigns that go with it, skillfully wielding "victim" stories to maximize external public funding of their "sovereignty."

The proliferation of easy, make-work jobs reserved for tribal members has eroded the Indian work ethic. A young Indian man once came into the garage where I used to work as a mechanic, asking my advice about a stalled car. Later he brought it in for me to repair. Since he seemed bright and curious, I encouraged him to go to the vocational school 45 miles away to learn auto mechanics so that he could earn a living and provide a badly needed service on the reservation. His reply: "No man, that's too much work." I saw him a few months later driving a car with U.S. government plates, "working" for the federal Indian bureaucracy.

One elderly Montana businessman I know notes that many Indians now living on reservations in states of semi-unemployment once worked in skilled trades in places like Seattle's shipyards or Los Angeles's factories. It wasn't until the federal government began building subsidized housing and offering other benefits on reservations in the 1960s that many of these productive citizens came "home" to idle. The result has been the creation of a largely unproductive population intensely dependent on government favors.

A number of Indian parents do not work at all. Many others hold jobs whose salary would be impossible to attain, given their level of education and productivity, in the competitive world away from the reservation. Both of these examples discourage schoolchildren from working hard in school. Combine these disincentives with the breakdown of Indian parenting and with the prevailing notion on reservations that "America owes us," and one begins to see that the misbehavior of so many Indian children is almost a logical outcome.

continued on page 77

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America's Single Most Promising Racial Solution is...

School Reform

By Nina Shokraii Rees

"Education is our passport to the future...tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today." —*Malcolm X*

For years, the civil rights establishment has viewed affirmative action and quotas as the answer to getting more blacks into the workforce, and the enforcement of federal civil rights laws as central to saving blacks from falling behind. But a close look at the facts reveals that the real key to black progress lies elsewhere. What really ails many black Americans today is the country's failed public K-12 education system. The worst enemies of black success are thus no longer racists, but rather the elected officials, judges, and activists who are blocking sweeping education reform in our inner-city schools.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a proficiency test administered nationwide by the U.S. Department of Education. Its results show that, at every grade level, African Americans score not only well below whites but below a "basic" level of proficiency. The NAEP also shows that the racial gap in test scores is growing. The performance of 17-year-old black and Hispanic students is now equal to that of 13-year-old whites on average, according to education historian Diane Ravitch.

Education Week reported this year that only 40 percent of the fourth and eighth graders in urban schools (where most blacks and

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Hispanics are enrolled) currently score at "basic" levels in reading, math, and science. As many as a quarter of all African-American boys in big cities end up in special education classes, and 26 percent of black males never finish high school. Students in these schools face schoolyard violence and classroom disruptions far more often, surveys show. And even among the children who graduate from urban high schools with high grade point averages, many ultimately leave college because they cannot do the work.

Public inner-city schools have not always been in such disarray. Until the early 1960s, many public schools were neighborhood institutions run by parents and localities. Then during the early struggle for desegregation, schools came under court orders and heavy government regulation. Many students were bused to distant campuses to achieve racial mixing. Principals and teachers lost control of their classrooms.

Around the same time, the federal government required rigid and expensive new programs to meet the needs of certain groups perceived as being short-changed (minorities, the handicapped, the low-income, immigrants). Today, the majority of federal education funding continues to be targeted at low-income children, though research shows scant benefits.

The focus on desegregation and low-performing populations continues to preoccupy urban public schools today. According to the Council of Urban Boards of Education, 69 percent of schools in large urban school districts are still under court order to maintain racial balance, forcing billion of dollars into this area instead of into ways of boosting student academic achievement.

A few public schools have defied the odds and provided urban students with good educations. These are often led by fearless principals willing to take on the education establishment and status quo lobbies long enough to make a difference. Most are charter or magnet schools that set a clear vision of the schools' mission, and keep the emphasis on student academic outcomes. Most successful schools depend on active parent involvement, and respond to parental input. Despite an influx of funds into inner cities, however, these few successful schools rarely get replicated. There are simply too many institutional forces in public school bureaucracies working against excellence, high standards, and accountability at present.

Inner-city children *can* prosper in school, however. We know this because many *non*-public schools operating in these same neighborhoods have served their students well. Inner-city Catholic schools have long produced solid results with low-income minority students. University of Chicago professor Derek Neal recently found that the probability an inner-city student would graduate from high school increased from 62 percent to 88 percent when the student was placed in a Catholic secondary school. He discovered that African-American and Hispanic students attending urban Catholic schools were more than twice as likely to graduate from college as their counterparts from public schools. And compared to public school counterparts, minority students who pass through urban Catholic schools can expect to earn eight percent higher wages in the future.

In *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*, authors Anthony Bryk, Valerie Lee, and Peter Holland find that higher standards and an emphasis on more advanced academic courses are critical to this achievement. Fully 72 percent of Catholic school students pursue an academic program, while 10 percent concentrate on vocational studies. In public schools, children are equally distributed between the two fields.

Recognizing the superior average performance of parochial and other private schools, the city of Milwaukee has in recent years operated a school choice program that provides vouchers which allow inner-city children to escape poor government-run schools. Studies of children participating in this program done by Paul Peterson of Harvard University and Jay Greene of the University of Houston show that after just three years, the gap between the white and minority test scores narrowed by 33 to 50 percent. Another study by Cecilia Rouse of Princeton University found that the Milwaukee choice program significantly increased the mathematical achievement of participating students.

Preliminary results from a similar private/parochial school choice program in Cleveland are also encouraging. Thanks to this growing body of evidence, support for measures that would allow more students to flee poor public schools are growing in popularity. A recent Phi Delta Kappa poll shows that 51 percent of Americans now support school choice. A poll last year by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies found that the proportion of African Americans in favor of school choice is now a whopping 87 percent among those in the childbearing ages of 26-35.

Dramatic improvements in the quality of education offered inner-city minority children can only occur if parents are allowed to select other alternatives wherever the local public schools are operating poorly. Top-down reforms and attempts to simply funnel more money to public schools have run their course.

The performance of 17-year-old black and Hispanic students is now equal to that of 13-year-old whites on average.

"When you are behind in a footrace," Martin Luther King, Jr., once suggested, "the only way to get ahead is to run faster than the man in front of you. So when your white roommate says he's tired and goes to sleep, you stay up and burn the midnight oil."

The gap in school achievement, and thence life success, that separates black and white children today can close. But only if American leaders will put aside politics, break the inner-city public school monopoly, and encourage minority families to burn the midnight oil in a race to catch up.

Nina Shokraii Rees is an education policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation.

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Clinton's Miserable "Race Initiative" Flop

By Evan Gahr

"The Negro has nothing but 'friends,' and may God deliver him from most of them, for they are like to lynch his soul." —W. E. B. Du Bois

He's been called everything from ineffectual to intolerant—a '60s relic hauled out to chair President Clinton's race advisory board. But even John Hope Franklin's harshest critics would likely concede that the Duke University historian is a man of his word.

Not long after Franklin was picked to lead the Advisory Board to the President's Initiative on Race—a year-long effort to promote dialogue and understanding—Franklin vowed to bar discussion on affirmative action. "The white side has been in control of virtually everything," he declared. "They're the ones who need education on what justice and equality mean."

Sure enough, when the seven-member board convened in November 1997 to discuss "diversity" and higher education, a man who might know a thing or two on the subject, anti-quota crusader Ward Connerly, was unceremoniously barred. Franklin explained that the California businessman had nothing to contribute to a discussion on "diversity."

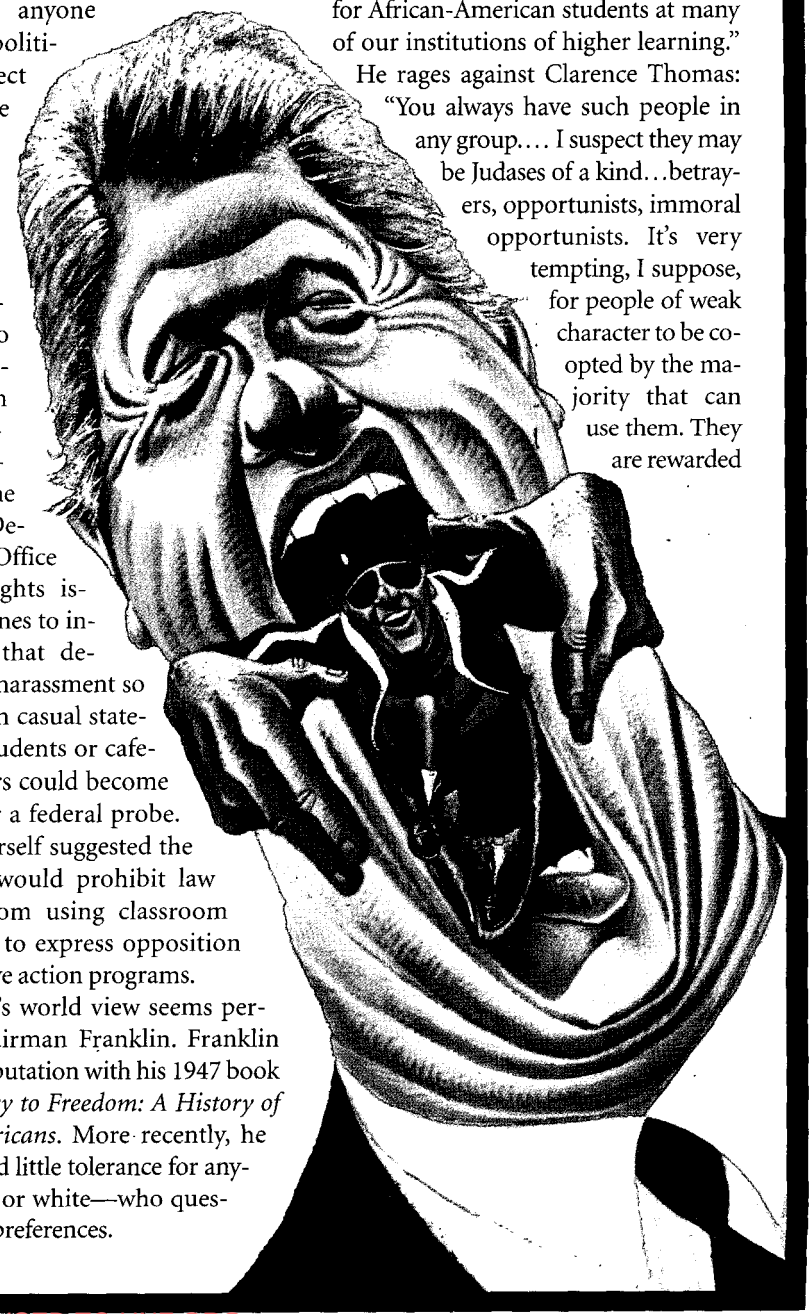
The exclusion of Connerly proved a public relations disaster. The Clinton administration took flak from all across the political spectrum—everyone from Newt Gingrich to liberal *New York Times* columnist Frank Rich complained that the commission was stifling debate. In response to the uproar, White House aides scurried to include a token conservative or iconoclast at subsequent meetings, but almost no memorable discussions occurred in the group's 300 gatherings.

No wonder. Consider the commission's makeup. Executive director Judith Winston, who oversees 30-odd staffers, has some curious credentials. As U.S. Education Department general counsel under Clinton, she worked to insure that anyone holding politically incorrect views on race would incur the wrath of the federal government. In 1994, Winston tried to force a federal speech code on universities nationwide. The Education Department's Office of Civil Rights issued guidelines to investigators that defined racial harassment so broadly even casual statements by students or cafeteria workers could become grounds for a federal probe. Winston herself suggested the guidelines would prohibit law students from using classroom discussions to express opposition to affirmative action programs.

Winston's world view seems perfect for chairman Franklin. Franklin made his reputation with his 1947 book *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*. More recently, he has displayed little tolerance for anyone—black or white—who questions racial preferences.

In his 1993 book, *The Color Line*, Franklin calls opposition to affirmative action a racist ploy. He insists that "under the banner of racial neutrality, white students have been encouraged to intimidate, terrorize, and make life miserable for African-American students at many of our institutions of higher learning."

He rages against Clarence Thomas: "You always have such people in any group.... I suspect they may be Judases of a kind...betrayers, opportunists, immoral opportunists. It's very tempting, I suppose, for people of weak character to be co-opted by the majority that can use them. They are rewarded



Ralph Bl... Jr

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in one way or another. If not on the Supreme Court of the United States, then some other way. So many people have a price, and it's not unusual, it's not surprising. Some blacks have a price. It's just tragic when anyone sells themselves out."

Harsh words from the leader of a racial peace-making commission. But Franklin's fellow commission member Linda Chavez-Thompson is an even sharper-toothed attack dog. An AFL-CIO vice president who occupies a post expressly created for a woman or minority, Chavez-Thompson gave a decidedly multicultural twist to GOP-bashing when in a 1996 Georgia speech she urged the union faithful to tell "corporations and Republicans... 'Kiss my *como se llama*." She also warned that the AFL-CIO wouldn't allow that "*como se llama* Newt Gingrich to destroy Medicare."

Another odd choice to promote racial harmony is panel member Angela Oh. A Los Angeles lawyer, Oh defended the black criminals who terrorized passersby and shop owners during the 1992 L.A. riots. "The people I saw running into the markets were stealing basics—diapers, food, dish racks," Oh told *Ms.* magazine. "These were not luxury items that they were taking."

She must have missed the rioters who took such "basics" as televisions and liquor, including $150,000 of booze lifted from one Korean-owned store alone. And despite the virulently anti-Asian nature of the riots—some 2,000 Asian-American-owned businesses were destroyed by looters who often passed over shops sporting "Black Owned" signs—Oh refused to cast any blame on the looters. After the riot, Oh made a name for herself by explaining on "Nightline," "Donahue," and elsewhere that the real responsibility for the destruction of society lay with society. "There is no way in hell that the events of the past several days can be placed on our shoulders, black or Korean," she asserted. "The chaos was the result of much larger failures—political, economic, and social."

Evan Gahr writes regularly for The American Enterprise.

"President Clinton's advisory panel on race held a hearing today on how to achieve diversity on college campuses but chose not to solicit the views of opponents of affirmative action. The chairman of the panel, John Hope Franklin, the historian, said only supporters of affirmative action were invited to speak at the daylong session because he wanted to hear only from those who saw the value of having a diverse student body."

—*New York Times*, November 20, 1997

Although he's a bit more genteel, board member Tom Kean is also obsessed with American society's faults. During Kean's reign as governor, New Jersey launched a controversial taxpayer-financed effort to introduce new classes on "race, class, and homophobia and heterosexism" at state colleges. As current president of Drew University, Kean has been outspoken in support of affirmative action and "diversity training." A Republican who likes to denounce the "far right," Kean calls for more "thoughtful Republicans" (modeled on himself, presumably).

Given the race commission's utter lack of diversity, it's not surprising that the closest thing to dialogue at most meetings has been panelists' mad bid to out-victim each other. At the first meeting in July 1997, Oh called for America to go beyond a "black-white paradigm." Visibly angry, Franklin shot back that "this country cut its eye teeth on racism with black-white relations"; he insisted the group would stick to the topic of black casualties.

Not to be outdone, Oh called for a federal department for the promotion of racial harmony. Then at its second meeting the board inadvertently offered evidence of why such a department might be useful: Whites don't even realize what a bunch of bigots they really are, explained some testifying academics. Harvard sociologist Lawrence Bobo, for example, claimed Caucasians suffer from "unconscious racism." (Cynics began to wonder why the board was spending millions of tax dollars to call whites racist. Why not let Al Sharpton do it for free?)

When the board gathered in Denver this March, American Indians disrupted the meeting to protest the panel's lack of Indian representation. In its effort to pander to every racial feeling, the board even offered white males an olive branch. In what Clinton administration officials termed—no joke—an outreach effort to white males, the April 1998 meeting was broadcast on ESPN.

Most of the session (moderated by President Clinton) was devoted to the question of why minorities are underrepresented in managerial positions in sports. (The question of why whites are grossly underrepresented on playing fields and arena floors went undiscussed.) Much of the "dialogue" involved football great Jim Brown berating Georgetown University basketball coach John Thompson, who is black, for sending his players to a white sports agent.

In late September, the advisory board turned in its report—widely described as "voluminous" and "lackluster"—to the President. Few persons from any part of the political spectrum voiced anger or praise for the platitudinous work, and chairman Franklin declined an interview request from the *New York Times* to discuss it.

In addition to many minor policy suggestions, the report's main recommendations were that more education and youth programs on race be created and that a permanent Council for One America be established that would make the commission immortal. The report's little-read rhetoric was predictable: "We as a nation need to understand that whites tend to benefit, either unknowingly or consciously, from this country's history of white privilege."

Leading thinkers on race disagree on the board's long-term consequences. "I never took it seriously from the

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beginning and haven't paid any attention, notwithstanding my personal respect for John Hope Franklin," says historian Eugene Genovese. "It's a joke."

But as Genovese spoke by telephone from his Atlanta home, his wife, historian Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, asked to get on the telephone. She offered a darker view. "Clinton was politically clever," she says. "It comforts everyone. It gives white Americans a way to be self-conscious. For blacks it exclaims barriers. It provides language that we're doing something important. But it's actually a barrier to prevent our getting at anything significant."

"Clinton is very clever," says National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise president Bob Woodson. "He appeared to be doing something" about the nation's racial problems, while actually offering nothing more than "an appeasement to the Left." When Woodson took part in the San Diego meeting, he attempted to challenge liberal clichés. He asked, for example, why blacks are failing in systems controlled by blacks, if racism is the prime obstacle to black success? "These are issues that the commission didn't address; their whole attitude was, We won't engage in them."

Writer Stanley Crouch suggests to *TAE* that the commission should have looked beyond the "jerks walking around in African robes" (i.e., campus Afrocentrists) and asked questions like, "What effect has the decline of public schools had on the chances of a so-called minority kid competing? So much of the problem is the public schools. That has to be a political issue—the quality of education. You can't have these substandard schools and expect that anything is going to be done about race. Only government can do as bad a job as that and still get paid." But that line of inquiry, of course, would have been a diversion from Clinton's own policies.

Avoiding hard questions, persistently blaming white racism for every problem blacks face, and attempting to pass all this off as "racial dialogue" is a fairly good summary of the Clinton administration's entire record on race. As Center for Equal Opportunity general counsel Roger Clegg notes, "This administration has been pro-preference from day one." It doesn't matter to them what the courts say, or what the public wants. From the beginning, the call to "mend, don't end" affirmative action masked the administration's ironclad support for race preferences that have lost most of their intellectual rationale and public support.

Meanwhile, national Republicans have also been mighty timid about tackling the nation's real race conflicts. In one of the rare instances where Congress addressed the issue head-on, the GOP majority failed to pass a House amendment that would have barred many federal race preferences.

"The difference between a liberal Democrat and a conservative Republican is about five cents," says Ward Connerly. "We let them get away with it; we don't demand accountability. There isn't a dime's worth of differerence between J. C. Watts (R-Okla.) and John Lewis (D-Ga.) when it comes to affirmative action and racial preferences."

That kind of argument is the sort of topic President Clinton's race commission glaringly failed to consider. Harvard Law School professor Randall Kennedy notes that while race is an issue most Americans grapple with regularly, there was no real give-and-take during meetings of the commission. When Kennedy, whose views defy left/right categorization, spoke before the commission in June, he found the staff well-intentioned and thoughtful. But the meeting was just plain "boring"—with little heat or light generated. "People had a sense that it was public relations and scripted."

Ward Connerly worries that the commission's legacy will be something even worse than empty P.R. In a meeting with Connerly, "Vice President Al Gore said we are all prone to bigotry—and that we need these [affirmative action] policies to rise above our instincts, keep us from ourselves." That kind of logic, says Connerly, "leads to a form of government intrusion into our lives that is...scary."

It appears the conventional wisdom is going to brand President Clinton's Race Initiative a lost opportunity—a

Turmoil in Harmony Land

"Led by historian John Hope Franklin, the seven-member advisory board has been denounced for political correctness (every member generally favors affirmative action) and censured for not wanting to listen to dissenters (Franklin declined to hear from affirmative action's leading opponent, Ward Connerly). At a recent community gathering in Dallas, which was sanctioned by the panel and led by Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater, the doors were shut and whites kept away....

Clinton has said often that the initiative's work is a top priority of his second term. But, more concretely, it has turned into the Initiative That Ate the Executive Branch. There are 30 people assigned to it, more than work on the entire White House domestic-policy operation. And that's not counting White House officials, like deputy chief of staff Sylvia Mathews, who spend long hours managing it, or the Cabinet secretaries and federal employees who have been ordered to come up with projects that deal with race.

The President got into it partly by looking at polls. Pollster Mark Penn discovered that Americans were moved by the sections on race contained in Clinton's second Inaugural Address and this year's State of the Union speech.... The White House chose to begin conversations on race, led by an advisory board kept under its tight control. It is so tight that the board won't even have the last word: Its report will be drawn up by a Clinton adviser....

Now Clinton is trying to salvage the situation. White boys like senior policy advisers Gene Sperling, Rahm Emanuel, and Bruce Reed have been brought back into the process."

—*Time*, December 22, 1997

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well-intentioned effort gone awry. That is a mistake. The President, after all, selected his panelists carefully. He chose to seat men and women at the table who had apologized for the Los Angeles rioters and called GOP congressmen pigs. He actively sought to exclude competing points of view.

In assembling such an un-diverse body, the President who promised a discussion actually ensured a lecture—one in which anyone who questioned liberal orthodoxy would be cast as insensitive or an outright bigot.

That's too bad, because our country could benefit from some open debate on the topic of race: Does the kind of "racial sensitivity" training now required at many workplaces and colleges reduce racial tensions? Or does it perhaps increase them, by encouraging participants to focus on their differences and see the normal vagaries of everyday life through a racial lens? Is it true, as Bob Woodson charges, that affirmative action is a cruel "bait and switch" in which the troubles of inner-city blacks are used to justify preferences that mainly benefit middle-class minority members?

To answer those kinds of pressing questions we will need an effort imbued with more honesty and fewer platitudes.

A SYMPOSIUM

What Clinton's Year-long Rap on Race Left Out

featuring

Jonetta Rose Barras, John Sibley Butler, Linda Chavez, John Dilulio, Larry Elder, Nat Hentoff, and Ed Koch

The Market Is Racism's Enemy

Larry Elder

The marketplace punishes racism. But try telling that to the President. The Advisory Board to his Race Initiative recently suggested a minimum-wage hike, better media images for minorities, and that Americans should learn a foreign language. My advice to the Commission? Enroll in Economics 101.

Take Cincinnati Reds owner Marge Schott. She collects Nazi memorabilia, and once lost control of her team for making insensitive racial remarks. But check out her line-up—black and Latino ballplayers. Why? She wants to go to the World Series.

A former Cleveland Cavaliers basketball owner publicly declared his intention to recruit more white players to increase attendance. The team stank, and black and white fans stayed away. Nobody likes losing, no matter the color of the losers.

Texaco lost $1 billion in stock market value when the public heard a tape of Texaco executives ridiculing black employees. Before Jesse Jackson could say, "We shall overcome," decent, right-thinking Americans reacted. Had Texaco not taken swift action, millions of consumers intended to cut up their credit cards. Denny's restaurant, after public disclosure of mistreatment of black customers, quickly offered a multi-million-dollar settlement.

In short, the marketplace confers a "negative tax" on racism, and the market's solution to racism is timeless: skills. A business's most cherished asset remains its employees. Employers find competent, enthusiastic, and dependable workers hard to come by. Competition compels bosses to fight over this type of employee, which means a good worker has plenty of options if he or she feels unappreciated.

In *Up From Slavery*, Booker T. Washington wrote, "I think that the whole future of my race hinges on the question as to whether or not it can make itself of such indispensable value that the people in the town and the state where we reside will feel that our presence is necessary to the happiness and well-being of the community. No man who continues to add something to the material, intellectual, and moral well-being of the place in which he lives is long left without proper reward. This is a great human law which cannot be permanently nullified."

A recent *Time* poll found that nearly 90 percent of black teens saw little or no racism in their own lives. Black Harvard sociologist Orlando Patterson (who, by the way, favors affirmative action) put it this way: "The sociological truths are that America, while still flawed in its race relations...is now the least racist white-majority society in the world; has a better record of legal protection of minorities than any other society, white or black; offers more opportunities to a greater number of black persons than any other society, including all those of Africa."

Mr. President, the gap is not between black and white but between the moti-

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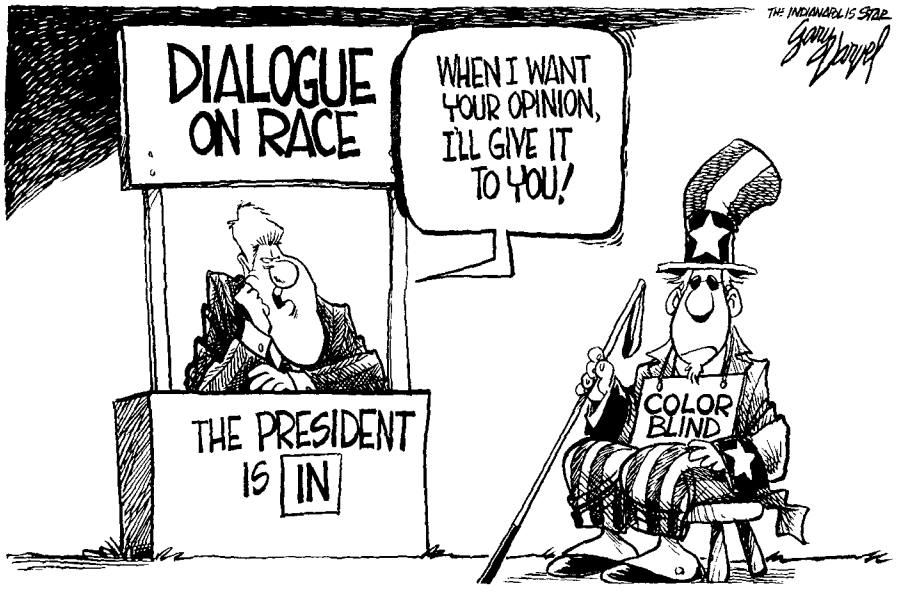
vated and unmotivated, the skilled and unskilled. Whether my boss "likes me" is less important than whether the paycheck bounces. So please excuse me from this "dialogue on race." The "dialogue" ain't worth the paper it's written on.

A native of south-central Los Angeles, Larry Elder is a lawyer and talk show host.



Be Fair to All the Disadvantaged

Edward I. Koch

Defenders of affirmative action almost always insist that no one who isn't qualified should be selected. But by qualified they mean minimally qualified. Combined with a tacit assumption of group rights, this approach, when applied in the real world, means that whites and Asians—no matter how economically disadvantaged or educationally deprived—may not compete equally in programs intended for blacks, Hispanics, and women. And of course, left entirely ignored is the unfairness of passing over better qualified white and Asian males.

This is unfair and un-American. It becomes even more ludicrous when a white Castillian Spanish immigrant direct from Spain is preferred on ethnic grounds over a non-Hispanic white male citizen.

An odd aspect of the current debate concerns Nathan Glazer, who for years lectured against racial and gender preferences but now believes they are necessary, though he would limit them to blacks. Why? "What was unforseen and unexpected was that the gap between the educational performance of blacks and whites would persist and, in some respects, deepen despite the civil rights revolution and hugely expanded social and educational programs, that inner-city schools would continue to decline, and that the black family would unravel to a remarkable degree, contributing to social conditions for large numbers of black children far worse than those in the 1960s. In the presence of those conditions, an insistence on color-blindness means the effective exclusion today of African Americans from positions of influence, wealth, and power."

Is that not an insulting statement, since so many blacks are making it to the top in every field on their own talent; for instance, Colin Powell, Tom Sowell, Oprah Winfrey, Carl McCall, Willie Brown, Kwesi Mfume, Hugh Price. One of the best reasons for ending affirmative action is the incorrect but widely held opinion that all blacks in college are there because of preferential treatment. Pulitzer prize-winners like *Daily News* columnist E. R. Shipp have every right to be insulted and are.

Glazer explains his change of heart: "I believe the main reasons we have to continue racial preferences for blacks are, first, because this country has a special obligation to blacks that has not been fully discharged, and second, because strict application of the principle of qualification would send a message of despair to many blacks, a message that the nation is indifferent to their difficulties and problems."

But aren't there an equivalent number of whites and Asians in poverty and without adequate education? Glazer replies that Asians, Hispanics, and women no longer need preferences or group rights. Hispanics, he says, only have problems with the English language, and "when it comes to women, there is simply no issue today when it comes to qualifying" at institutions of higher learning.

I prefer alternatives that provide for the poor and the educationally disadvantaged without treating any ethnic group unfairly. Instead of racial or gender preferences, we could give preferences to persons who demonstrate leadership and overcome adversity; to the top 10 percent of all high school graduating classes; to all small contractors in contract bids. We could use a lottery system open to all when the pool of applicants is larger than the number of student admissions, jobs, or contracts available. In New York City during my administration, we increased the number of minority police officers by providing free classes on how to take a civil service exam. That concept can be applied to all government opportunities.

The President's Commission should have examined these alternatives, instead of only seeking to justify existing preference programs.

Ed Koch was mayor of New York City from 1978 to 1989.

The Racism Industry

Jonetta Rose Barras

The way some people are lamenting racism in America, you'd think we were back in cotton- and tobacco-picking days with white overseers galloping through the fields slashing black backs. Each year, countless articles and books decry the deplorable state of race relations in the country. Ad campaigns target it, pleading for its end; it's the topic of forums and commissions like the one President Clinton created last year.

But the people shouting the loudest and wringing their hands the most are those who have reaped the greatest benefits from all the programs, grants, and federal policies designed to eradicate racial discrimination. Much of their

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complaint is not the result of their being the victims of any egregious form of racism—although I would be naive and foolish to say racism does not exist. No, what bothers many blacks, some whites, and now a growing number of Hispanics, is that without the continued focus on racism the cottage industry that feeds their wallets may be demolished.

Who stands to benefit from this never-ending dialogue about race, which offers no solutions but only unabashed celebration of the problem? Who gains when Jesse Jackson convenes a summit on Wall Street's failure to play ball with blacks? One answer could be his son, Jonathan, a broker. Certainly poor African Americans in Mississippi and poor whites in Appalachia can't even think about Wall Street investments; they're too busy trying to make sure there is at least a cup of soup before each child at dinner time.

If the commission had looked at the statistics on the beneficiaries of affirmative action, it would have discovered that the policy continues to favor the middle and upper classes, while tens of millions of poor citizens languish at the bottom, becoming a permanent underclass. If the commission had looked at the quality of education available to poor children of all races, it would have seen that even the highest-achieving students at many urban public schools still fall far behind those in private schools.

A clear indication that the troubles between races are more than skin deep could have been found in the commission's own backyard. Washington, D.C. is predominantly black, but who will claim its high unemployment, abysmal public schools, lousy health care, high crime, and poor political leadership are the result of racism? Sure, some might point to the "occupation-like" role of a Republican Congress. But even before the Republicans took control, the city had a sympathetic Democratic Congress, and the committees overseeing the District included influential African Americans.

The tensions between blacks and Hispanics in Washington have little to do with one group speaking Spanish and the other not, or with one's skin being slightly lighter than the other. It has to do with economics. They fight for jobs, because there aren't enough to go around and even fewer that offer executive salaries. Whites weren't angry with Mayor Marion Barry because he's black but because his administration didn't provide decent municipal services. By any standard, other than race, he was a failure.

The race commission would have done an enormous service had it attempted to demonstrate, through example and discussion, that racial obsessions misdirect much public policy discussion. It would have made a substantial contribution had it focused on how to reduce economic discrimination in America. But the panel of middle-class and upper-income persons had its own interests to protect.

Jonetta Rose Barras is the author of The Last of the Black Emperors.

Black America's True Heroes

John Sibley Butler

The President's dialogue on race could have concentrated on the positive things that members of racial groups have done throughout American history. But with the exception of black participation in the military, the commission has focused on people with no idea of what it takes to prosper in America. The commission overlooked what has always made America strong: the struggle by parents and communities to achieve education and prosperity, even in the face of extreme hostility. At the turn of the century, when Japanese Americans were discriminated against, they responded by creating business enterprises, educating their children, and producing one of the most highly educated populations on the West Coast. When segregation was running strong in the South, the Negro population created over 200 private elementary and secondary schools, and over 100 private colleges and universities.

This tradition was started by free blacks prior to the Civil War. As Loren Schweniger notes in *Black Property Owners in the South 1790-1915,* free blacks placed a strong value on the education of their children, a value whites as a whole had not developed. After careful analysis, Schweniger concludes that only 1 percent of 200 black families in one Louisiana parish, were illiterate. In the same parish, 20-25 percent of white families were illiterate. This tradition continues today: Southern states, where segregation was the strongest, are in the forefront of producing black college graduates from historically black private schools, historically black public schools, and the more recently integrated white schools.

This educational miracle, created by ex-slaves, stands on the shoulders of the black self-employed. Historian Margaret Levenstein recently reported that black Americans in 1910 were more likely than any other ethnic group in America to be self-employed. Shop owners built and maintained early communities and are the true heroes of black America. Even today, black Southerners dominate education and community service within the now-scattered "black community." Oprah Winfrey is a graduate of Tennessee State University, Spike Lee and Martin King are Morehouse graduates, and Atlanta industrialist Gregory Baranco is a graduate of Southern University in Baton Rouge.

Similarly, on the East Coast, Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe laid the foundation for future generations by running small shops and stressing the value of education to their children. Despite widespread anti-Semitism, they became some of the best-educated Europeans that America has ever produced. Today their grandchildren stand out in stark contrast to most "white" Americans in the fields of higher education and the professions.

The same path of self-employment and education is being followed in our time by, to name a few, immigrant Nigerians, Koreans, Pakistanis, and Vietnamese. The tradition was started by a persecuted group that landed in Boston in the 1600s and concentrated on entrepreneurship and education. In fact, Boston and Atlanta have a lot in common. The Atlanta system of Morehouse College, Spelman College, Morris Brown College, and Atlanta University are wonderful examples of past generations of merchants providing opportunities for future generations. Harvard University,

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originally sustained by a pub in England, and other Boston universities are in the same tradition.

The President's dialogue only sought to bring people together to talk about a vague notion of fairness and love, yet one can envision a country that is multicultural, but economically poor. Ironically, when ethnic minorities react to hostility by pouring their energy into entrepreneurship and education, their descendants prosper in America. While everyone cannot be an entrepreneur, it has always been the entrepreneur who creates opportunities for the future. Let us focus on the tradition of excellence of all groups instead of on historical complaints. As Charles Moskos and I wrote in *All That We Can Be: Black Leadership and Racial Integration the Army Way,* "Concentrate on opportunities rather than white racists."

John Sibley Butler is the author of Entrepreneurship and Self-help Among Black Americans.

Start with Individuals

Nat Hentoff

Toward the end of a televised conversation that was part of his "Race Initiative," President Clinton asked journalist Richard Rodriguez if colleges aren't better off with "racially diverse" faculties and student bodies? Rodriguez had no patience for that kind of affirmative action. He answered, "You should start at the bottom of the social ladder. You should start in first grade rather than at graduate school. You should make sure America has a system of education that saves children in the first grade because we lose them there."

Rodriguez, unlike Clinton, recognizes the fundamental importance of the Fourteenth Amendment's "equal protection of the laws." At one point he said to Clinton and the panel, "The language of affirmative action is that poor white males are somehow represented in the public society. Like hell they are. Where *are* the Appalachian whites represented?"

Clinton's race commission should have taken Justice William O. Douglas's approach to this fundamental issue. Douglas, perhaps the most liberal justice in the Supreme Court's history, stated unequivocally that preference by race or gender was unconstitutional and instead urged that each applicant be seen as an individual, not as part of some collective identity.

Accordingly, Douglas added, if a college applicant had demonstrated the ability to overcome obstacles—poverty, a dysfunctional family, a physical handicap, etc.—such qualifications of character and resourcefulness should be taken into account, even if that particular applicant's grades and test scores were not at the very height of achievement.

This would be constitutional—and fair. The late Justice Lewis Powell made the same point in his opinion in the landmark *Bakke* case that addressed affirmative action in admissions to the University of California, Davis. Powell said race could be a factor, but never the deciding one, along with musical ability, geographic demographics, creative writing, superior ability in science, and so forth. Far too many colleges have deliberately distorted Powell's opinion, claiming they base their preference policies on it, when they largely ignore everything but the word *race.*

Richard Rodriguez understands what the President never has: What is needed in the first grade and beyond is education for *individual youngsters,* not youngsters stereotyped by skin color or ethnicity.

Civil libertarian Nat Hentoff's latest book is Living the Bill of Rights.

The Preference Problem

Linda Chavez

The President's race commission ended not with a bang but a whimper, offering little more than a whiny list of grievances about "white privilege" and a litany of complaints of continuing racial and ethnic discrimination. Missing from the report was any serious examination of the black community's most pressing problems: the alarming rate of out-of-wedlock births that threatens the foundations of the black family; high levels of violent crime that make homicide a leading cause of death among young black men; the failure of public education to provide black children with the skills needed to compete in an increasingly demanding economy.

Instead, the report offered up total silence on illegitimacy, jeremiads on the unfairness of incarcerating crack dealers, and assurances to teachers' unions that incompetent teachers would be given "career counseling." Nor did the report deal any more meaningfully with the challenges facing other disadvantaged minority groups, specifically Hispanics, or with the often hostile inter-group tensions between ethnic minorities, for example between blacks and Asians or blacks and Hispanics.

But perhaps the panel's greatest failure was its refusal to address the most contentious issue in race relations today—the pervasive system of racial and

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ethnic preferences that infect colleges, government contracting, and public and private employment practices. For years, proponents have argued that affirmative action programs did not amount to special preferences and were simply a means to ensure equal treatment of those who had suffered past discrimination. The President's race commission repeats this line by asserting that affirmative action "has been used as a political wedge to polarize public opinion...[but] remains an important tool among many for overcoming racial discrimination and promoting the benefits of diversity in education, employment, and other contexts." What the panel did not say is that ethnic preferences are themselves a form of discrimination, one that benefits the most elite segments of the black and Latino communities, often at the expense of other minority groups and low- and moderate-income whites.

Nowhere is this system of racial and ethnic preferences more prevalent than in college admissions. The Center for Equal Opportunity has amassed data from dozens of colleges and universities and published comprehensive studies of university admissions by race and ethnic group in California, Colorado, Michigan, North Carolina, Washington, as well as West Point and the Naval Academy. In virtually every instance, our studies provide empirical evidence of pervasive bias. Nearly all the schools admit black students whose grades and test scores are substantially below those of white and Asian students who are admitted, and most schools admit Hispanics students whose qualifications are somewhat lower than whites and Asians.

Since college admissions are a zero-sum game, for every less qualified black or Hispanic student who is admitted, a more qualified Asian or white student is excluded. This policy produces thousands of actual victims of discrimination and makes a mockery of our commitment to equal opportunity. No amount of ranting about "white privilege" can mask this failure to live up to the principles of the civil rights movement.

Linda Chavez is president of the Center for Equal Opportunity and former director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Don't Ignore Religion

John J. DiIulio, Jr.

The President's race initiative is quite disappointing. Economically, it is based on outmoded ideas about black purchasing power. Socially, it muffles evidence of black/white convergence on issues ranging from crime to abortion to affirmative action. One would hardly know from it that, while many inner-city blacks remain in poverty, blacks now have $500 billion a year in consumer sovereignty. Neither would one know that black/white differences in satisfaction with standards of living, housing, and jobs narrow greatly once blacks and whites of the same education and income levels are compared.

But the initiative suffers most of all from being an ABC—Anything But Christianity—venture. Try telling the history of efforts to abolish slavery without mentioning the Christian convictions of most white abolitionists. Try capturing the history of the civil rights movement without tracing the religious roots of black leaders.

You can't, because every major struggle over race in America has unfolded largely as an intramural religious struggle to Christianize race relations, that is, to discover and apply the correct civic meaning of Christian ideals, first with respect to slave-holding, then to civil rights, and finally in our own day, with regard to racial self-segregation and race-based public policies like affirmative action.

Until recently, most African Americans were among America's poorest citizens. Thus, the Christian dialogue about race in America has also been a dialogue about imitating Christ's special love for the poor. Here, too, racially progressive Christians have defeated racially reactionary ones. Try to find church-going white Christians who claim it would not be a grave sin to refuse help to the poor because of the color of their skin. You could have found many a half-century ago, and not just in the South, but no more.

What the race commission should have tackled, then, is the need to foster religious racial reconciliation, especially as it affects the responsibility Christians have to help the inner-city minority poor.

William Jefferson Clinton, church-going Christian and son of the South, had the initiative blessed by the usual rainbow coalition of clergy, black and white. But that was stained-glass political window-dressing. The "diversity" and "inclusivity" so valued by the commission were not extended to America's last unprotected class: people who really do believe in the God of the Bible.

Where the President's initiative has failed, a strange-bedfellows coalition of Christian leaders may yet succeed. Conservative white evangelicals, progressive white evangelicals, black Christian clergy, and Catholics should come together in a "Coalition for Christian Racial Reconciliation and the Inner-City Minority Poor."

Let white conservative evangelicals lead, for between them and black Christian churchmen the Christian racial divide has always run deepest. Let there be a three-part agenda. First, begin a spiritual dialogue about Christianity and racial reconciliation, from the historic failure of many white churchmen to march with black churchmen for civil rights, to the need for fellowship with today's urban poor of different races. Second, launch a legislative dialogue about government anti-poverty programs, affirmative action, and other public policies that have become (or are by nature) racially loaded. Third, promote a civil society dialogue on how Christian faith communities can come together to support the "least of these," beginning with inner-city youth and community outreach ministries that help poor minority children avoid violence, achieve literacy, and gain jobs.

Urban churches, led by black churches, do incredible amounts of community service in poor neighborhoods. And it makes a big difference: Young black urban males who attend church are more likely to escape poverty than comparable persons who remain unchurched.

On race relations as on all else, ye shall know them not by their words but by their works.

John DiIulio, an adjunct fellow at AEI, is founder of the Partnership for Research on Religion and At-risk Youth.

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The Great Divide

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON AND W. E. B. DU BOIS DEBATE HOW TO PROSPER THE BLACK RACE

Which should come first for black Americans: the economic or the political? Wealth or votes? At century's end, the choice is often presented as one between the assertive black nationalism of Malcolm X and the Christian integrationism of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. The incompleteness of this dichotomy is illustrated by the black "conservatives" profiled elsewhere in this issue, who often seem to have a foot in both camps.

Perhaps no two men have better embodied the choice between the economic and the political than Booker T. Washington—ex-slave, founder of the Tuskegee Institute, and the most visible spokesman for black Americans at our century's dawn—and W. E. B. Du Bois, who was co-founder of the NAACP and editor of its magazine, The Crisis.

Over the years, these two men have sometimes been caricatured: Booker T. Washington as an accommodationist Uncle Tom, meekly accepting segregration and urging blacks to be happy with menial employment; W. E. B. Du Bois as a haughty intellectual who cared only for the educated Negro elite, his "talented tenth," and despised the farming and laboring people for whom Washington spoke.

Their visions of the role of black people in American life were far richer than these cartoons would suggest. Washington was an apostle of black enterprise, which he believed would instill in his people "feelings of self-reliance and self-respect, which are the basis of all real progress, moral or material." Echoes of Washington can be heard in voices as disparate as those of Justice Clarence Thomas and today's black Muslims. Du Bois insisted upon a "renaissance of American Negro literature" and a place for Negroes in American intellectual life—a place that is, at long last, being occupied.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

An adaptation from *Up From Slavery*, 1901.

Ignorant and inexperienced, it is not strange that in our first years as free Negroes we began at the top instead of at the bottom. A seat in Congress or the state legislature was more sought than real estate or industrial skill. I would say: "Cast down your bucket where you are."

Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions. No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top. Nor should we permit our grievances to overshadow our opportunities.

To those of the white race who look to the incoming of those of foreign birth and strange tongue for prosperity, I would repeat what I say to my own race: "Cast down your bucket where you are." Cast it down among the eight millions of Negroes whose habits you know, whose fidelity and love you have tested in days when to have proved treacherous meant the ruin of your firesides. Cast down your bucket among these people who have, without strikes and labour wars, tilled your fields, cleared your forests, built your railroads and cities. We shall stand by you with a devotion that no foreigner can approach, interlacing our industrial, commercial, civil, and religious life with yours in a way that shall make the interests of both races one. In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.

There is no defense or security for any of us except in the highest intelligence and development of all. One-third of the population of the South is of the Negro race. We shall constitute one-third and more of the ignorance and crime, or one-third of the business and industrial prosperity.

Agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly. Enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of struggle rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercises of these privileges.

How I wish we could burn it into the hearts and heads of all that usefulness, service to our brother, is the supreme end of education. The ignorant race is tempted to jump, at one bound, to the position that it has required years of hard struggle for others to reach. Unfortunately for us as a race, our education was begun, just after the Civil War, too nearly

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ENJOYMENT OF ALL THE PRIVILEGES THAT WILL COME TO US MUST BE THE RESULT OF STRUGGLE RATHER THAN OF ARTIFICIAL FORCING. NO RACE THAT HAS ANYTHING TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE MARKETS OF THE WORLD IS LONG IN ANY DEGREE OSTRACIZED.

—BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

where New England education ended. Boys have been taken from the farms and educated in law, theology, Hebrew, and Greek—everything but the very subject they should know the most about. Since self-support and industrial independence are the first conditions for lifting up any race, education in theoretical and particular agriculture, horticulture, dairying, and stock-raising should have occupied the first place in our system.

A short time ago, in one of our Southern cities, a colored man died who had received training as a skilled mechanic during the days of slavery. By his skill and industry he had built up a great business as a house contractor and builder. In this same city there are 35,000 colored people who have been well educated in languages and literature, but not a single one could be found who had been trained in architectural and mechanical drawing that could carry on the business which this ex-slave had built up, and so it was soon scattered to the wind.

Not long ago a black mother, who lived in one of the Northern states, had her boy thoroughly taught the machinist's trade. A job was secured in a neighboring shop. With dinner bucket in hand and spurred on by the prayers of the now happy mother, the boy entered the shop to begin his first day's work. What happened? Every one of the 20 white men threw down his tools and deliberately walked out, swearing that he would not give a black man an opportunity to earn an honest living. Another shop was tried, with the same results, and still another and the same. Today this promising and ambitious black man is a wreck—a confirmed drunkard, with no hope, no ambition. My friends, we are one in this country. No race can wrong another race simply because it has the power to do so without being permanently injured in morals. If a white man steals a Negro's ballot it is the white man who is permanently injured. Physical death comes to the one Negro lynched in a county, but death of the morals—death of the soul—come to the thousands responsible for the lynching.

Manifestly some of the great races of today—particularly the Negro race—have not as yet given to civilization the full spiritual message which they are capable of giving. The question is, then: How shall this message be delivered? The answer is plain: By the development of these race groups as races. For the development of Negro genius, of Negro literature and art, of Negro spirit, only Negroes bound together and inspired by one vast ideal can work out in its fullness the great message we have for humanity.

We are Americans, not only by birth and by citizenship, but by our political ideals, our language, our religion. Farther than that, we are Negroes, members of a vast historic race. It is our duty to conserve our physical powers, our intellectual endowments, our spiritual ideals; as a race we must strive by race organization, by race solidarity, by race unity to the realization of that broader humanity which freely recognizes differences in men, but sternly deprecates inequality in their opportunities of development.

For the accomplishment of these ends we need race organizations: Negro colleges, Negro newspapers, Negro business organizations, a Negro school of literature and art. No people that laughs at itself, and ridicules itself, and wishes to God it was anything but itself ever wrote its name in history. We *must* be inspired with the Divine faith of our black mothers, that out of the blood and dust of battle will march a victorious host, a mighty nation, a peculiar people. And such a people must be united; united to keep black boys from loafing, gambling and crime; united to guard the purity of black women and to reduce that vast army of black prostitutes that is today marching to hell; and united in serious organizations to determine by careful conference and thoughtful interchange of opinion the broad lines of policy and action for the American Negro.

W. E. B. DU BOIS

An adaptation from *The Souls of Black Folk*, 1903.

UPI Corbis/Bettman

Easily the most striking thing in the history of the American Negro since 1876 is the ascendancy of Mr. Booker T. Washington. To gain the sympathy and cooperation of the various elements comprising the white South was Mr. Washington's first task; and this, at the time, seemed, for a black man, well-nigh impossible. And yet ten years later it was done in the word spoken at Atlanta: "In all things purely social we can be as separate as the five fingers, and yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." This "Atlanta Compromise" is by all odds the most notable thing in Mr.

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Washington's career. The South interpreted it in different ways: The radicals received it as a complete surrender of the demand for civil and political equality; the conservatives, as a generously conceived working basis for the mutual understanding. So both approved it, and today its author is certainly the most distinguished Southerner since Jefferson Davis, and the one with the largest personal following.

Next to this achievement comes Mr. Washington's work in gaining place and consideration in the North. So thoroughly did he learn the speech and thought of triumphant commercialism, and the ideals of material prosperity, that the picture of a lone black boy poring over a French grammar amid the weeds and dirt of a neglected home soon seemed to him the acme of absurdities. One wonders what Socrates and St. Francis of Assisi would say to this.

This is an age of unusual economic development, and Mr. Washington's program naturally takes an economic cast, becoming a gospel of Work and Money to such an extent as to almost completely overshadow the higher aims of life. Moreover, this is an age when the more advanced races are coming in closer contact with the less developed races, and Mr. Washington's program practically accepts the alleged inferiority of the Negro. Mr. Washington distinctly asks that black people give up, at least for the present, three things—political power, insistence on civil rights, and higher education of Negro youth—and concentrate all their energies on industrial education, the accumulation of wealth, and the conciliation of the South.

Is it possible, and probable, that nine millions of men can make effective progress in economic lines if they are deprived of political rights, made a servile caste, and allowed only the most meager chance for developing their exceptional men? If history and reason give any distinct answer to these questions, it is an emphatic *No.* And Mr. Washington thus faces the triple paradox of his career:

1. He is striving nobly to make Negro artisans business men and property-owners; but it is utterly impossible, under modern competitive methods, for workingmen and property-owners to defend their rights and exist without the right of suffrage.

2. He insists on thrift and self-respect, but at the same time counsels a silent submission to civic inferiority such as is bound to sap the manhood of any race in the long run.

WAS THERE EVER
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FAIR EARTH CIVILIZED
FROM THE BOTTOM UPWARD?
NEVER; IT IS, EVER WAS
AND EVER WILL BE
FROM THE TOP DOWNWARD
THAT CULTURE FILTERS.

—W. E. B. DU BOIS

3. He advocates common-school and industrial training, and depreciates institutions of higher learning; but the Negro common-schools could not remain open a day were it not for teachers trained in colleges.

The Negro race, like all races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men. The problem of education, then, among Negroes must first of all deal with the Talented Tenth; it is the problem of developing the best of this race that they may guide the mass away from the contamination and death of the worst. If we make money the object of man-training, we shall develop money-makers but not necessarily men.

The blind worshippers of the average look at Negro leaders and cry out in alarm: "These are exceptions, look here at death, disease and crime—these are the happy rule." Of course they are the rule, because a silly nation made them the rule. But a saving remnant continually survives and persists. Do Americans ever stop to reflect that there are in this land a million men of Negro blood, well-educated, owners of homes, against the honor of whose womanhood no breath was ever raised, whose men occupy positions of trust and usefulness, and who, judged by any standard, have reached the full measure of the best type of modern European culture?

Can the masses of the Negro people be in any possible way more quickly raised than by the effort and example of this aristocracy of talent and character? Was there ever a nation of God's fair earth civilized from the bottom upward? Never; it is, ever was and ever will be from the top downward that culture filters.

How then shall leaders of a struggling people be trained and the hands of the risen few strengthened? There can be but one answer: The best and most capable of their youth must be schooled in the colleges and universities of the land. Every isolated group or nation must have its yeast, must have for the talented few centers of training where men are not so befuddled by the hard toil of earning a living as to have no aims higher than their bellies, and no God greater than Gold.

Education and work are the levers to uplift a people. Work alone will not do it unless guided by intelligence. Education must not simply teach work—it must teach life. The Talented Tenth of the Negro race must be made leaders of thought and missionaries of culture among their people. The Negro race, like all other races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men.

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In Real Life

First-person America

CASPER CONFESSIONAL

By Dale Anema

LITTLETON, COLORADO—Seven years ago I happened to sit down in a Casper, Wyoming hotel bar at about 6:30 for complimentary hors d'oeuvres and a drink. A guy nearby loudly told a pretty good joke, which reminded the person next to me of other jokes. By ten o'clock six of us were huddled at the end of the bar: a truck driver, an independent oilman, a financial analyst, a traveling salesman, the hotel's lady manager, and I.

Jokes reminded us of life situations, and vice versa, and eventually we were truly baring our souls, describing successes and failures, hopes and disappointments, sins and nobility, delights and regrets. In one of those rare moments when personal façades drop, nothing was sacred—infidelities, lies, prejudices, ugly pride, fears, righteousness, relationships with God were all matter-of-factly laid upon the bar. Jokes made the horror of some of the stories more chilling. Every word was carefully listened to; no praise or condemnation was forthcoming. Stories were told in near third person, with no apparent ego or humility.

The truck driver grew up in rural Georgia. When he was in high school, he and his friends cruised around looking for black men with white women or in white neighborhoods. They would jump out of the car and beat the hapless young men within an inch of their lives. He said they almost considered it a religious crusade. He now counted his dispatcher, a fellow driver, and two dock workers who regularly load his truck—all blacks—among his best friends. He solemnly described the self-loathing he felt over these brutal, senseless acts of his youth.

The oilman quietly told us that when he was a wildcatter in his mid-twenties, his neighbor informally invested in a three-well drilling-pool. The first two were dusters, the third came in a marginal well. Our oil companion had retained a quarter interest in the wells and after paying the bills his share would barely cover his living expenses, not

IN ONE OF THOSE RARE MOMENTS WHEN PERSONAL FAÇADES DROP, NOTHING WAS SACRED. JOKES MADE THE HORROR OF SOME OF THE STORIES MORE CHILLING.

enough for him to keep his company afloat. So he told his neighbor that because of cost overruns the first two wells had depleted the drilling fund and he'd raised the money for the third well from additional investors. His neighbor never questioned the story, just said it was a long shot anyway and thanks for the opportunity. Six months later the neighbor lost his job and was having a difficult time. The oilman wanted to help him out but wasn't yet doing that well himself. A couple of years later the neighbor was killed in an auto accident. Our drinking buddy helped with the funeral expenses and over the next several years occasionally gave money to the widow and her kids, but never had the heart to tell them of his cheating. He blubbered as he related his haunted feelings—some nights he didn't sleep at all.

The salesman said his sales territory used to include Sacramento, California. He'd become quite friendly with a buyer and after seeing her professionally once a month for about a year they began an affair. She became pregnant, and they split the cost of the abortion. Shortly thereafter he was assigned a new territory so he no longer had to deal with that untoward situation. His wife of five years didn't find out. A few years later he was in the room when their first child was delivered. He felt some remorse for the abortion, but in his euphoria put it out of his mind.

As his daughter grew, his guilt began to overwhelm him. He spent almost every night in bars, even when he was in town. When he did see his wife and daughter, he was angry and distant. After several months of this, his wife suggested a trial separation. He broke down and told her all. She said she suspected something like that, but still loved him and wanted to stay married and provide a stable home for their daughter. He found another sales job that required less travel and spent every minute he could with his wife and daughter. He felt unworthy of his family's love and devotion.

I recounted a situation I'd had 15 years before. I was having an affair with a divorced co-worker who had two children. She became pregnant twice, intentionally I thought; both times I said I wouldn't marry her. I didn't encourage or discourage abortions, but she had two. We later split up on nasty terms, and I had no contact with her or her kids from that day.

Later, when I had begun to become a different person, I wanted to have a family with a lady I'd met. Then the agony I'd caused began to torment me. Not only was I responsible for snuffing out the lives of my own babies, but also for adding incredible misery to two other children. I prayed for forgiveness daily,

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but still had a gnawing feeling it was too little too late. The pernicious choices I'd made fostered irreparable harm I feared would haunt me the rest of my life, and perhaps thereafter.

We confessors were interrupted by the clatter of dishes and murmur of the breakfast crowd. It was suggested we have breakfast together, but I think we all knew the magical hours were over. It was one of those evenings that can never be duplicated.

I wonder what became of those people. I never saw any of them again, but they are always on my mind—because that night they were all so openly human I could see their hearts beating.

Dale Anema is a commercial traveler.

SELLING THE UNIVERSE

By Michael I. Casper

ITHACA, NEW YORK—A little more than two years ago I was looking through a magazine and saw a small ad that offered meteorites for sale (yes, meteorites…space rocks…cosmic debris…the rarest material on this planet). It had never crossed my mind that a regular person could own a meteorite. I sent away for a catalogue, placed an order, and was hooked.

I have always collected unusual things, and soon I had an awful lot of meteorites. We had just sold our espresso café, and I was trying to figure out what next. As my meteorite collection took over more and more of the house, we decided to see if we could turn this passion into a business. Through lots of hard work we have grown to where we are now one of the largest meteorite dealers in the world, with thousands of clients in every corner of the globe.

There are three main classes of meteorites: stones, irons, and stony-irons (also called pallasites). Stone meteorites are those with exteriors most similar to terrestrial rocks. When sliced open, they can be found to contain flecks of metal or spherical bodies called chondrules. Irons are meteorites whose composition is primarily iron with small amounts of nickel and cobalt. An iron meteorite is extremely dense and heavy in proportion to its size. Pallasites are meteorites made up of both stone and iron. Many of them contain beautiful olivine crystals that can be seen after they are sliced. Within these three main classes there are literally dozens of sub-classes, and our inventory has representatives of nearly every type, including a small lunar specimen and meteorites from Mars. We have gigantic irons that weigh several hundred pounds, and delicate and beautiful pallasites.

While this may sound glamorous, it is a lot of hard work. I travel over 80,000 miles annually by truck, going to shows and buying specimens. My wife, Cathi, handles the administrative side of the business and the shipping. We rarely work less than 14-hour days. My two sons, Ariel and Gideon, ages ten and eight, go to several shows a year with us. They help with security and with loading and unloading the truck of over a ton of meteorites. Gideon even has an area in our booth where he sells minerals. Our phone starts ringing before breakfast seven days a week and often rings well into the night, with calls from all over the world. We answer an average of 50 e-mails and faxes daily.

Meteorites are referred to as either "falls" or "finds." A fall is just that—a witnessed entry where the meteorite is hunted down shortly thereafter. A find is a stone stumbled upon and later identified as a meteorite. Meteorites have names—they are named for the postal location nearest to where they were seen or found.

Meteorites are priced by weight, with the more plentiful irons ranging from 5 cents per gram (for really large and heavy specimens) to $10-$15 per gram for rare irons. Stone meteorites can be priced anywhere from $1.25 per gram to hundreds, sometimes thousands, of dollars per gram for those that are extremely unusual. A few pallasites, but not many, are priced under $20 per gram.

Who collects meteorites? Everyone. Our customers range from the most prestigious museums of the world to the 12-year-old boy in California who saves his allowance and calls twice a year. We have clients who are serious collectors and others who collect simply because they are fascinated by the idea they can own material not of our planet. Our customers also include scientists who study meteorites in an effort to unlock the mysteries of the universe. One group of stone meteorites called carbonaceous chondrites contains amino acids; the human body also contains amino acids. Food for thought?

We get our meteorites from contacts around the globe. In the Sahara Desert and the Antarctic meteorites are readily visible to the naked eye, and meteorite hunters risk their lives traveling to these locations and others. Potential risks are great, but so are potential rewards. Sometimes we buy from other dealers. We exchange meteorite material with many of the world's major museums and educational institutions.

We also receive dozens of rock samples a week from persons who believe they have found a meteorite. Many people think that meteorites contain colors like red, blue, green, or yellow, and that they glitter (neither of which is true). Meteorites don't have any kind of predictable appearance other than an exterior that appears "burnt." Iron specimens often contain indentations that look like thumbprints.

Many meteorites have been uncovered by farmers while plowing. Others have been found using metal detectors (99.9 percent of all meteorites will attract a magnet, if only slightly). Some discoverers just notice a strange rock and are persistent in their identification attempts. Meteorites can be found anywhere by anyone. Anybody going searching would do well to arm himself with a powerful magnet, a metal detector, and some luck.

So the next time you're outdoors on a crisp night and you see a shooting star, remember that you are watching a piece of another world go dancing by. What secrets does it contain? Where has it been traveling for the last several million years? Will it reach the surface of our Earth? And what will it tell us if it does?

Michael Casper of Casper Meteorites, Inc., can be reached at casper@meteorites.com.

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the EPA Economist

The "Environmental Racism" Hoax

By David Friedman

When the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) unveiled its heavily criticized environmental justice "guidance" earlier this year, it crowned years of maneuvering to redress an "outrage" that doesn't exist. The agency claims that state and local policies deliberately cluster hazardous economic activities in politically powerless "communities of color." The reality is that the EPA, by exploiting every possible legal ambiguity, skillfully limiting debate, and ignoring even its own science, has enshrined some of the worst excesses of racialist rhetoric and environmental advocacy into federal law.

"Environmental justice" entered the activist playbook after a failed 1982 effort to block a hazardous-waste landfill in a predominantly black North Carolina county. One of the protesters was the District of Columbia's congressional representative, who returned to Washington and prodded the General Accounting Office (GAO) to investigate whether noxious environmental risks were disproportionately sited in minority communities.

A year later, the GAO said that they were. Superfund and similar toxic dumps, it appeared, were disproportionately located in non-white neighborhoods. The well-heeled, overwhelmingly white environmentalist lobby christened this alleged phenomenon "environmental racism," and ethnic advocates like Ben Chavis and Robert Bullard built a grievance over the next decade.

Few of the relevant studies were peer-reviewed; all made critical errors. Properly analyzed, the data revealed that waste sites are just as likely to be located in white neighborhoods, or in areas where minorities moved only after permits were granted. Despite sensational charges of racial "genocide" in industrial districts and ghastly "cancer alleys," health data don't show minorities being poisoned by toxic sites. "Though activists have a hard time accepting it," notes Brookings fellow Christopher H. Foreman, Jr., a self-described black liberal Democrat, "racism simply doesn't appear to be a significant factor in our national environmental decision-making."

© Tony Stone Images

THE EPA'S "ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE" REGULATION REDRESSES AN OUTRAGE THAT DOESN'T EXIST.

This reality, and the fact that the most ethnically diverse urban regions were desperately trying to *attract* employers, not sue them, constrained the environmental racism movement for a while. In 1992, a Democrat-controlled Congress ignored environmental justice legislation introduced by then-Senator Al Gore. Toxic racism made headlines, but not policy.

All of that changed with the Clinton-Gore victory. Vice President Gore got his former staffer Carol Browner appointed head of the EPA and brought Chavis, Bullard, and other activists into the transition government. The administration touted environmental justice as one of the symbols of its new approach.

Even so, it faced enormous political and legal hurdles. Legislative options, never promising in the first place, evaporated with the 1994 Republican takeover

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in Congress. Supreme Court decisions did not favor the movement.

So the Clinton administration decided to bypass the legislative and judicial branches entirely. In 1994, it issued an executive order—ironically cast as part of Gore's "reinventing government" initiative to streamline bureaucracy—which directed that every federal agency "make achieving environmental justice part of its mission."

At the same time, executive branch lawyers generated a spate of legal memoranda that ingeniously used a poorly defined section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as authority for environmental justice programs. Badly split, confusing Supreme Court decisions seemed to construe the 1964 Act's "nondiscrimination" clause (prohibiting federal funds for states that discriminate racially) in such a way as to allow federal intervention wherever a state policy ended up having "disparate effects" on different ethnic groups.

Even better for the activists, the Civil Rights Act was said to authorize private civil rights lawsuits against state and local officials on the basis of disparate impacts. This was a valuable tool for environmental and race activists, who are experienced at using litigation to achieve their ends.

Its legal game plan in place, the EPA then convened an advocate-laden National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC), and seeded activist groups (to the tune of $3 million in 1995 alone) to promote its policies. Its efforts paid off. From 1993, the agency backlogged over 50 complaints, and environmental justice rhetoric seeped into state and federal land-use decisions.

Congress, industry, and state and local officials were largely unaware of these developments because, as subsequent news reports and congressional hearings established, they were deliberately excluded from much of the agency's planning process. Contrary perspectives, including EPA-commissioned studies highly critical of the research cited by the agency to justify its environmental justice initiative in the first place, were ignored or suppressed.

The EPA began to address a wider audience in September 1997. It issued an "interim final guidance" (bureaucratese for regulation-like rules that agencies can claim are not "final" so as to avoid legal challenge) which mandated that environmental justice be incorporated into all projects that file federal environmental impact statements. The guidance directed that applicants pay particular attention to potential "disparate impacts" in areas where minorities live in "meaningfully greater" numbers than surrounding regions.

THE REGULATION ALLOWS THE FEDS TO INTERVENE UP TO SIX MONTHS AFTER ANY LAND-USE PERMIT IS ISSUED ANYWHERE IN THE U.S.

The new rules provoked surprisingly little comment. Many just "saw the guidance as creating yet another section to add to an impact statement," explains Jennifer Hernandez, a San Francisco environmental attorney. In response, companies wanting to build new plants had to start "negotiating with community advocates and federal agencies, offering new computers, job training, school or library improvements, and the like" to grease their projects through.

In December 1997, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals handed the EPA a breathtaking legal victory. It overturned a lower court decision against a group of activists who sued the state of Pennsylvania for granting industrial permits in a town called Chester, and in doing so the appeals court affirmed the EPA's extension of Civil Rights Act enforcement mechanisms to environmental issues.

(When Pennsylvania later appealed, and the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case, the activists suddenly argued the matter was moot, in order to avoid the Supreme Court's handing down an adverse precedent. This August, the Court agreed, but sent the case back to the Third Circuit with orders to dismiss the ruling. While activists may have dodged a decisive legal bullet, they also wiped from the books the only legal precedent squarely in their favor.)

Two months after the Third Circuit's decision, the EPA issued a second "interim guidance" detailing, for the first time, the formal procedures to be used in environmental justice complaints. To the horror of urban development, business, labor, state, local, and even academic observers, the guidance allows the federal agency to intervene at any time up to six months (subject to extension) after any land-use or environmental permit is issued, modified, or renewed anywhere in the United States. All that's required is a simple allegation that the permit in question was "an act of intentional discrimination or has the effect of discriminating on the basis of race, creed, or national origin."

The EPA will investigate such claims by considering "multiple, cumulative, and synergistic risks." In other words, an individual or company might not itself be in violation, but if, combined with previous (also legal) land-use decisions, the "cumulative impact" on a minority community is "disparate," this could suddenly constitute a federal civil rights offense. The guidance leaves important concepts like "community" and "disparate impact" undefined, leaving them to "case by case" determination. "Mitigations" to appease critics will likewise be negotiated with the EPA case by case.

This "guidance" subjects virtually any state or local land-use decision—made by duly elected or appointed officials scrupulously following validly enacted laws and regulations—to limitless ad hoc federal review, any time there is the barest allegation of racial grievance. Marrying the most capricious elements of wetlands, endangered species, and similar environmental regulations with the interest-group extortion that so profoundly mars urban ethnic politics, the guidance transforms the EPA into the nation's supreme land-use regulator.

Reaction to the Clinton administration's gambit was swift. A coalition of

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groups usually receptive to federal interventions, including the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Association of Counties, and the National Association of Black County Officials, demanded that the EPA withdraw the guidance. The House amended an appropriations bill to cut off environmental justice enforcement until the guidance was revised. This August, EPA officials were grilled in congressional hearings led by Democratic stalwarts like Michigan's John Dingell.

Of greatest concern is the likelihood the guidance will dramatically increase already-crippling regulatory uncertainties in urban areas where ethnic populations predominate. Rather than risk endless delay and EPA-brokered activist shakedowns, businesses will tacitly "redline" minority communities and shift operations to white, politically conservative, less-developed locations.

Stunningly, this possibility doesn't bother the EPA and its environmentalist allies. "I've heard senior agency officials just dismiss the possibility that their policies might adversely affect urban development," says lawyer Hernandez. Dingell, a champion of Michigan's industrial revival, was stunned when Ann Goode, the EPA's civil rights director, said her agency never considered the guidance's adverse economic and social effects. "As director of the Office of Civil Rights," she lectured House lawmakers, "local economic development is not something I can help with."

Perhaps it should be. Since 1980, the economies of America's major urban regions, including Cleveland, Chicago, Milwaukee, Detroit, Pittsburgh, New Orleans, San Francisco, Newark, Los Angeles, New York City, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, grew at only one-third the rate of the overall American economy. As the economies of the nation's older cities slumped, 11 million new jobs were created in whiter areas.

Pushing away good industrial jobs hurts the pocketbook of urban minorities, and, ironically, harms their health in the process. In a 1991 *Health Physics* article, University of Pittsburgh physicist Bernard L. Cohen extensively analyzed mortality data and found that while hazardous waste and air pollution exposure takes from three to 40 days off a lifespan, poverty reduces a person's life expectancy by an average of 10 *years*. Separating minorities from industrial plants is thus not only bad economics, but bad health and welfare policy as well.

Such realities matter little to environmental justice advocates, who are really more interested in radical politics than improving lives. "Most Americans would be horrified if they saw NEJAC [the EPA's environmental justice advisory council] in action," says Brookings's Foreman, who recalls a council meeting derailed by two Native Americans seeking freedom for an Indian activist incarcerated for killing two FBI officers. "Because the movement's main thrust is toward...'empowerment'..., scientific findings that blunt or conflict with that goal are ignored or ridiculed."

PUSHING AWAY INDUSTRIAL JOBS HURTS THE POCKETBOOKS OF URBAN MINORITIES, AND HARMS THEIR HEALTH TO BOOT.

Yet it's far from clear that the Clinton administration's environmental justice genie can be put back in the bottle. Though the Supreme Court's dismissal of the Chester case eliminated much of the EPA's legal argument for the new rules, it's likely that more lawsuits and bureaucratic rulemaking will keep the program alive. The success of the environmental justice movement over the last six years shows just how much a handful of ideological, motivated bureaucrats and their activist allies can achieve in contemporary America unfettered by fact, consequence, or accountability, if they've got a President on their side.

David Friedman is a writer, an international consultant, and fellow in the MIT Japan program.

A DEADLY MIX continued from page 59

I want to note that many Indians have "made it" in America. They have jobs, or are employers themselves. In our area of northern Montana, the largest wholesale distributor of gasoline and diesel is owned by an Indian named Ezzie Ereaux. The area's main tourist resort is owned and operated by an Indian family. One of the biggest ranchers and businessmen in our county is an Indian; his son holds an M.D. Another Indian family includes two M.D.s, a retired hospital administrator, and a hospital nursing supervisor. A local Indian girl recently won a full scholarship (not specifically targeted to Indians) to Montana State University. I hear from a fellow teacher that the greatest math talent in the area is a teenaged Indian boy.

Off our local reservation, many Indians work at jobs just like any other American. Indians who show the requisite reliability, punctuality, and willingness to work have no trouble finding and keeping positions. Banks, groceries, convenience stores, and ranches often have Indian employees. Indian-run ranches and farms are common on the reservation, although much of the economic activity consists of white farmers growing crops or raising cattle on land leased from Indian landowners.

Many Indians are successful for the same reasons other Americans succeed: They have a work ethic, literacy, frugality and business acumen, and a command of standard English that allows them to play in the same league as other Americans. The sad thing is that many more Indians could be succeeding with them, instead of drowning in pathology—if only they were treated more like other citizens, and less like a race apart.

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Flashback

TO KNOW NOTHING OF WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE YOU WERE BORN IS TO REMAIN EVER A CHILD—*Cicero*

The Atheist who Played in Peoria

Robert G. Ingersoll

Library of Congress/Corbis

Before the Civil War, he was a shrewd Illinois lawyer with corporate and railroad clients. A celebrated wit and gifted speaker, he entered politics, convinced that slavery was a wicked institution whose time was up. He was rumored to be a religious skeptic, even a scoffer. His heresy, he was told, would be a handicap in pursuing the political career he desired.

No, he was not Honest Abe. Indeed, this Illini lawyer, running his own congressional race in 1860, denounced Lincoln for being soft on the Fugitive Slave Law. But Abe won, and Robert Ingersoll lost, and while Abe went to Valhalla, Bob went to...well, millions would later come to have an opinion on *that* subject.

Robert Ingersoll gained renown for two activities that seem absurdly incompatible today: He was the nation's best-known propagator of the atheist creed, and he was the leading Republican orator of his age.

Robert G. Ingersoll was born in 1833 in the Finger Lakes region of New York, son of an itinerant Congregationalist minister. He loved his father but not his Father: "I have a dim recollection of hating Jehovah when I was exceedingly small."

As a Peoria lawyer, he rode the free-thinkers' lecture circuit in the early 1870s, ridiculing biblical inconsistencies, praising the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and predicting a glorious future in which "*Reason*, throned upon the world's brain, shall be the King of Kings, and God of Gods." (Think of him as Ayn Rand with a sense of humor. When a cigar manufacturer named one of its stogies the "Bob Ingersoll," the tobacco-mad namesake provided the slogan: "Let us smoke in this world—not in the next.")

Two years after declaring, "The Bible burned heretics, built dungeons, founded the Inquisition, and trampled upon all the liberties of men," Ingersoll delivered the most famous nominating speech in political convention history. He told the assembled Republicans in 1876, "Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lances full and fair against the brazen foreheads of every defamer of his country and maligner of its honor. For the Republican party to desert a gallant man now is worse than if an army should desert their general upon the field of battle."

Well, the Republicans did desert Blaine—"the continental liar from the state of Maine," as the unchivalrous called him—and nominated Rutherford B. Hayes instead. But Ingersoll's bizarre dual reputation was made: He hated G-O-D but loved the G-O-P. (As one wag noted, "A man who disbelieves in God may well believe in Blaine.")

It is inconceivable today that the nation's leading atheist would be the Republican party's most popular speaker, but there you are. Ingersoll's political faith was ultra-orthodox: His trinity was gold, the tariff, and the GOP. By all accounts a kindly family man, Ingersoll was savage on the stump. He said of William Jennings Bryan, "His brain is an insane asylum without a keeper."

In our age, when "bipartisanship" is next to godliness, Ingersoll's waving of the bloody shirt could make a *USA Today* editorial writer faint: "The Democratic party embraces within its filthy arms the worst elements in American society.... Every man that shot Union soldiers was a Democrat. Every man that denied to the Union prisoners even the worm-eaten crust of famine, and when some poor emaciated Union patriot, driven to insanity by famine, saw in an insane dream the face of his mother, and she beckoned him and he followed, hoping to press her lips once again against his fevered face...the wretch that put the bullet through his loving, throbbing heart was and is a Democrat.... The man that assassinated Abraham Lincoln was a Democrat.... Every man that raised bloodhounds to pursue human beings was a Democrat.... Soldiers, every scar you have on your heroic bodies was given you by a Democrat."

So, who you gonna vote for?

He was friendly with presidential candidates—James Garfield called him "Royal Bob"—but the usefulness of "Robert Injuresoul" always ended the day after the returns came in. A rumored ambassadorial appointment by President Hayes never materialized, for as the *Washington Post* jested, Ingersoll was already "plenipotentiary of his Satanic Majesty to the United States of America."

Ingersoll remained an unrepentant Republican and atheist to the end. His ashes are buried in Arlington Cemetery. As the Charleston *News and Courier* reported his passing: "Robert Ingersoll died yesterday. Perhaps he knows better now."

—Bill Kauffman

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TBS Does RWR

Will Hollywood ever make the real Ronald Reagan Story? Testifying before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, October 25, 1947.

Imagine you're a studio executive or network honcho. One day a writer comes to you and pitches this idea: "It's the story of a young man from the Midwest, circa 1937. Chasing the American dream, he journeys from Iowa to Hollywood. Overnight, success. He signs with a major studio and soon becomes a genuine star.

"Rich, handsome, with a bachelor pad high in the Hollywood Hills, our hero is the envy of every American man. Eventually, he marries, has children, and is chosen to lead the actors' union. But by this time, the world is a different place.

"Our hero, who has always been sympathetic to every bleeding-heart cause, begins to see the big picture: The Cold War is about good versus evil. His duty becomes clear: He speaks out against Communists trying to infiltrate the business, testifies before Congress, even informs to the FBI. It costs him: He's repudiated, a prophet without honor. Communists threaten to disfigure his face so he'll never work again. Movie offers stop pouring in. His marriage disintegrates.

"The denouement: After toughing it out through these wilderness years, he finds true love, becomes a popular political figure, is twice elected President, and wins the war in which he enlisted more than 40 years before, the very war every previous President believed would be a long twilight struggle—triumph on an epic scale.

"We'll call it," the writer tells you, "*An American Life.*"

You hear ideas all the time, but this one has the makings of a blockbuster. Drama, intrigue, romance, even action. This project will tell the story of the American century. What's more, Mel Gibson and Edward Burns are candidates for the lead. Sounds like something any studio exec would jump at, right?

Welcome back to reality. For now, perhaps because of the historical research required to make such a film, or because Cold Warriors aren't often depicted as heroes, the Ronald Reagan story you were just pitched isn't on the drawing board. But that doesn't mean Hollywood is uninterested in Reagan.

Last June, Time Warner's TBS Superstation announced plans for *The Reagans*, a four-hour miniseries scheduled for fall 1999. ABC is also planning a movie about Nancy Reagan. Of the two, the TBS project promises to be more elaborate. "I just thought it was a great story," says executive producer Mark Sennet. "I wanted to go behind the scenes and really relive that history from the Reagans' point of view."

Sennet knows some of that history. He covered the Reagans as a Time-Life photographer during the 1976 and '80 campaigns. And over the course of a half-dozen recent visits with Nancy Reagan, Sennet convinced her to cooperate. She and long-time Reagan aide Michael Deaver have signed on as consultants, ensuring Sennet and writer Dennis Turner inside information for the script.

But rather than emphasizing key elements of Ronald Reagan's life, such as the struggle with Communists in Hollywood, Sennet has another tale in mind: "I feel the Reagans are a great love story," Sennet told me. "It was a great team."

No doubt. But what about how the team first met in 1949 when actress Nancy Davis contacted Ronald Reagan, then-president of the Screen Actors Guild, because her name had mistakenly appeared on rosters of Communist front groups? For TBS, that's mere window dressing. Programming executive Jim Head told me the Reagans' politics will receive little if any attention. He's more interested in talking about the publicity *The Reagans* will generate. "It's so high profile, that's the beauty of this project to me," says Head. "This was one of the most beloved Presidents of our time."

It's refreshing to hear executives finally acknowledging Reagan's vast appeal. But there's more at work here. Hollywood is, after all, a business, and it hopes to capitalize on the beginning of a reassessment of Reagan, as well as the public's weariness of the smoke-and-mirrors stage management that spins the Clinton White House.

What a switch. Reagan was ridiculed for his movie star career and criticized for turning the White House into a Hollywood set. But when measured against Bill Clinton, it's obvious who's gone Hollywood.

As this article goes to press, Jim Head tells me *The Reagans* has been scaled back even further—to only two hours. So instead of a dramatization of one of the most amazing periods in American history, when a future President was tested by fire, learning lessons that would serve him decades later when he sat across from Gorbachev, TBS seems to have in store a nicely packaged story that breezes through over 50 years in less time than it takes to watch a Braves game.

Oliver Stone, by contrast, devoted over three hours to Richard Nixon, without commercials. And Tricky Dick didn't even win the Cold War.

—John Meroney

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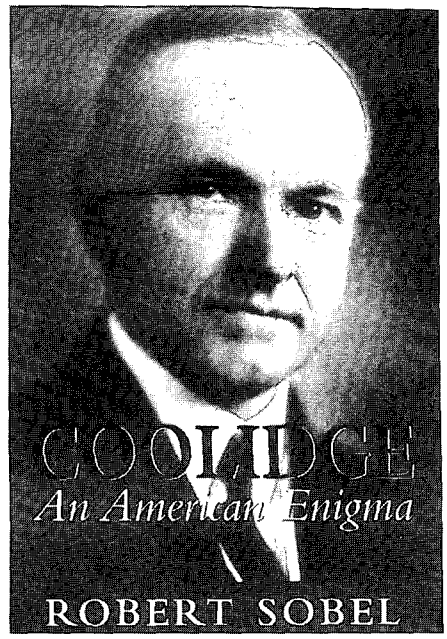
BookTalk



CALVIN'S CREED

By John McClaughry

Coolidge, An American Enigma
By Robert Sobel
Regnery, 419 pages, $34.95

Liberal historians delighted in Calvin Coolidge, for to them he was the perfect example of what they thought was wrong with pre-New Deal America. In the face of demands for expanding the scope and expense of the national government, this most Jeffersonian of twentieth-century Presidents did, well, basically nothing.

Coolidge appeared to have a deep-seated belief in the maxim that doing and saying nothing is, on the average, likely to be noticeably better than doing or saying something. To liberals, nothing could be more convincing evidence of a fundamentally flawed character.

Coolidge's inactivity was, to them, an aggravating vice. An outraged Walter Prescott Webb declared, "Coolidge ruined his health and brought himself to the edge of the grave with the sheer intensity of his inactivity." Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., that most influential of Presidential historians, painted the Coolidge years as a dismal valley between Wilson's reformism and Roosevelt's New Deal, inhabited by knuckle-dragging Republican Neanderthals.

The major, perhaps only, accomplishments of Coolidge's five years in office were repeatedly reducing income tax rates, reducing the national debt, and vetoing the McNary-Haugen agricultural bill.

As for taciturnity, Coolidge became an American legend. When asked why he attended so many Washington dinners, he observed, "Got to eat somewhere." When confronted by a gushy socialite who said "Mr. President, I have made a bet that I can get you to say more than two words," he replied, "you lose." Informed Coolidge had died, literary critic Dorothy Parker famously asked, "How can they tell?"

Coolidge offered only one piece of advice to his successor, Herbert Hoover. "You have to stand every day three or four hours of visitors. Nine-tenths of them want something they ought not have. If you keep dead still they will run down in three or four minutes. If you even cough or smile they will start up all over again." It is hard to imagine a fund-raising coffee in the Coolidge White House.

What, one might ask, prompts Robert Sobel's informative new examination of this most inactive and reticent of Presidents? Surely the issues of the 1920s—Teapot Dome, the Kellogg-Briand Treaty, McNary-Haugen—are now little more than trivia questions in a course on twentieth-century American history.

The real reason for a modest revival of interest in Coolidge is growing admiration for a man who, with few of the political skills required in his day (let alone ours), rose from a Vermont hill farm to the highest office in the land mainly by virtue of character, steadfastness, plainspokenness, and a firm grasp of eternal truths—coupled, admittedly, with rare luck.

Calvin Coolidge developed those personal qualities growing up in Plymouth Notch, Vermont, a tiny hamlet little changed today from the years of Calvin's youth. There in the shadow of the Green Mountains this son of a farmer, storekeeper, and sometime state legislator worked with team and scythe, roamed the fields and woods, delighted in the progression of the seasons, and read Cicero in Latin by kerosene light.

As he was to say years later, "Vermont is my birthright. Here one gets close to nature.... My folks are happy and contented. They belong to themselves, live with their incomes, and fear no man." An all-white, gun-owning, Republican-voting rural village of people who voice such sentiments would likely be viewed as an Aryan Nation enclave by today's liberals.

Calvin was graduated from Amherst College, read and practiced law in Northampton, and step by step advanced to the governorship of Massachusetts. Along the way he gained public approval for an address entitled "Have Faith in Massachusetts." In this homily Coolidge declared that "the final approval of the people is given not to demagogues, slavishly pandering to their selfishness, but to statesmen, ministering to their welfare, representing their deep silent, abiding convictions." That certainly worked for him.

As Governor, Coolidge gained national acclaim for his firm handling of the 1919 Boston police strike, during which he wrote the AFL's Samuel Gompers, "there is no right to strike against the public safety, by anybody, anywhere, any time." Largely as a result of this well-publicized success, Coolidge became the 1920 Republican Vice Presidential nominee, to the dismay of backroom bosses who temporarily lost control of a convention that had earlier been forced to accept their undistinguished presidential choice, Warren Harding.

As Vice President, Coolidge existed in lonely obscurity, living in an $8-a-day,

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two-room apartment in the Willard Hotel. When Harding suddenly died in August 1923, Coolidge was on the final day of a short vacation in Plymouth Notch. The news of Harding's death came late at night, brought by a reporter who rode down with it 12 miles from Ludlow, as the one phone in Plymouth Notch had been retired for the evening. There, past midnight, by the light of a kerosene lamp, notary public John Coolidge administered the oath of office to his son.

In the next five years, while he was President, Coolidge lost his father and, even more tragically, his 16-year-old son Calvin Jr., who died in the White House of an infection from a broken blister.

Coolidge was never the same after his beloved son's death, and was eager to retire from office in 1928. He died in 1933, just before Roosevelt's inauguration. In one of his last conversations, he lamented the advance of "socialistic notions of government." He was referring not to Roosevelt—who had just been elected on a platform of cutting federal expenditures by 25 percent—but to the hyperactive Hoover, whom Coolidge disliked. "That man has given me nothing but advice," Coolidge once remarked, "all of it bad."

When Coolidge died, even the cynical H.L. Mencken, who had derided him while he was in office, relented. "We suffer most when the White House bursts with ideas," Mencken wrote. "With a World Saver [Wilson] preceding him and a Wonder Boy [Hoover] following him he begins to seem, in retrospect, as an extremely comfortable and even praiseworthy citizen. His failings are forgotten; the country remembers only the grateful fact that he let it alone. Well, there are worse epitaphs for a statesman."

Coolidge's philosophy was well summarized in his 1920 address to the delegation that notified him of his nomination as vice president. "In a free republic a great government is the product of a great people. They will look to themselves rather than government for success. The destiny of America lies around the hearthstone. If thrift and industry are taught there, and the example of self-sacrifice oft appears, if honor abide there, and high ideals, if there the building of fortune be subordinated to the building of character, America will live in security, rejoicing in an abundant prosperity and good government at home and in peace, respect and confidence abroad. If these virtues be absent there is no power that can supply these blessings. Look well to the hearthstone; therein all hope for America lies."

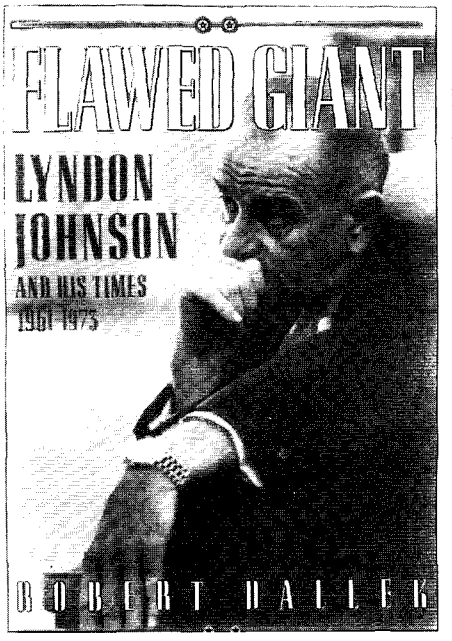
One can imagine a modern President saying such words, on the advice of pollsters and focus groups. Calvin Coolidge said it from the heart, and it would be well if someone as honest, plain spoken, and sincere said it to America again.

John McClaughry is president of Vermont's Ethan Allen Institute.

TEXAS-SIZED LIAR

By David Kopel

Flawed Giant: Lyndon Johnson and His Times 1961-1973
By Robert Dallek
Oxford University Press, 628 Pages, $35



Since the foundation of the Republic, no President has held sway over the United States as did Lyndon Baines Johnson in 1964 and 1965. Johnson, as he often reminded people, pushed into law more significant legislation during that period than even FDR had in 1933-34. Confirmed in 1964 by the largest popular vote percentage ever recorded in a presidential election up to that time, Johnson seemed on the way to becoming the most influential President of the century.

But by 1967, Johnson's world was collapsing, and in March 1968, terrified of losing the Democratic nomination to Robert Kennedy, he announced he would not run for re-election. How could such a talented man fall so far, so fast? *Flawed Giant*—Robert Dallek's giant biography of Lyndon Johnson from his ascension to the Vice Presidency in 1961 until his death in 1973—provides some answers.

Besides synthesizing the large volume of scholarship already published about Johnson, Dallek conducted vast original research, including interviews with Lady Bird Johnson and Bill Moyers and analysis of papers and White House tapes that have recently become available to the public. Like Richard Nixon, Johnson made extensive secret tapes of Oval Office conversations; about half of them have been released, and they provide Dallek with major new information about the LBJ presidency.

Most of Dallek's material from 1963-65 is already familiar, but as Johnson and America sink deeper and deeper into Vietnam, Dallek's fresh research becomes engrossing.

As Dallek explains, Johnson lacked a strategy for American success in Vietnam. He got into Vietnam because he feared the imminent collapse of the South Vietnamese regime would provoke a "who lost Vietnam?" backlash similar to the "who lost China?" charges that Harry Truman faced. Not only would an anti-Communist backlash imperil Johnson's domestic programs; Johnson could not bear to be seen as weak. He lacked a realistic plan for how to end the conflict; as long as North Vietnam was determined to conquer the South, and as long as Johnson was determined not to risk war with China by invading the North, stalemate was assured.

Not only did Johnson lie to the American people about the prospects for the war, he surrounded himself with liars. Johnson wanted only positive information, and his anger at aides who tried to tell him the truth about the military situation in Vietnam ensured he would hear only that we were winning.

Johnson likewise deceived himself about domestic opposition to the war, insisting that it was inspired and carefully directed by Soviet agents. At Johnson's direc-

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tion, J. Edgar Hoover's FBI spied extensively on the anti-war movement and the bureau reported to Johnson again and again that there was no substantial foreign or Communist connection. But these reports did nothing to relieve the President's paranoia.

As the White House staff recognized, by 1967 Johnson had become so mentally unbalanced as to call into question his fitness to continue to serve in office. He was frequently depressed, and often lapsed into frightening paranoid rants.

Dallek's revelations about the 1968 presidential campaign are particularly interesting. Right up until the riots broke out at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Johnson had hopes of being drafted as his party's nominee, even though he had withdrawn from the race half a year before. Afraid that Hubert Humphrey would not toe Johnson's line in Vietnam, LBJ (who would have preferred to be succeeded by Nelson Rockefeller) bugged Humphrey's campaign and for most of 1968 made only half-hearted efforts for the Vice President who had served him so loyally.

During the general election race, Johnson discovered but did not disclose that Richard Nixon's campaign had received a $500,000 contribution from the military junta running Greece. LBJ kept his knowledge of this crime secret until 1973, when the Nixon administration attempted to blackmail Johnson into convincing Congress to shut down the Watergate investigation. LBJ let Nixon know that Johnson knew about the bribe from the Greeks; the White House pressure abruptly ceased.

The Dallek book is considerably more evenhanded than Robert Caro's volumes, which treat Johnson as a monster. Dallek's orientation is that of a conventional liberal—praising Johnson's domestic accomplishments and bemoaning the distraction of the Vietnam War—yet the author's domestic policy evaluations are so brief that their liberal slant provides no impediment to a conservative's enjoyment of the book.

Dallek is not afraid to show Johnson's arrogance, megalomania, and insecurity, all of which kept Johnson stuck in Vietnam long after a more rational man would have begun exploring alternatives. But Dallek gives scant attention to Johnson's numerous extra-marital affairs, or to his family life. Thus, while *Flawed Giant* thoroughly documents Johnson the President, the book provides less insight into LBJ's character than does Jeff Shesol's *Mutual Contempt*, a study of the relationship between Johnson and Robert Kennedy.

American historians will continue to puzzle over how one man of humble origins could combine such prodigious quantities of good and evil, insight and self-delusion. But the American people must answer another question: Since FDR created the modern imperial presidency, why do we so often elect Presidents like Johnson, talented men with no regard for the truth; men with so much assurance of their own righteousness and so much personal arrogance that they violate federal statutes the way ordinary people violate speeding laws, ignore the Constitution, and lie to the American people?

The presidencies of FDR, LBJ, Nixon, and Clinton collectively suggest that the office of President, as it currently exists, attracts gluttonously ambitious men who pose dangers to constitutional government. Perhaps the next time the American people vote, they should pay less attention to the candidates' platitudes and instead insist that the next President do what any President could easily do, but none has seriously considered in the last six decades: Shrink the executive branch of the federal government, and the presidency itself, back to constitutional dimensions.

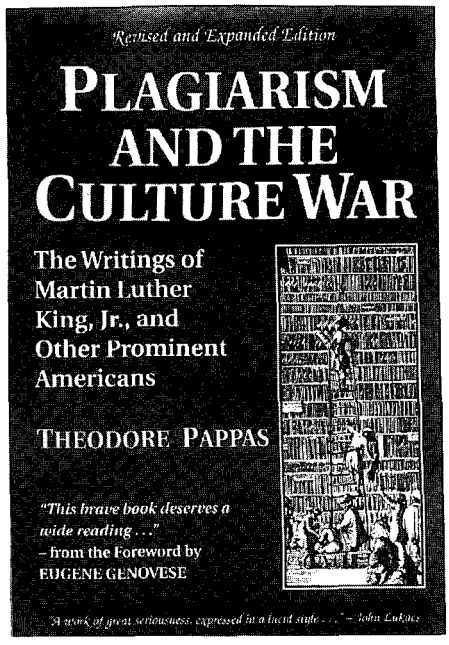
David Kopel is research director at the Independence Institute.

COPY CAT

By Nicholas Stix

Plagiarism and the Culture War: The Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Other Prominent Americans
By Theodore Pappas
Hallberg, 212 pages, $16.95

For the past eight years, intellectual sleuth Theodore Pappas, longtime managing editor of *Chronicles*, has hunted down prominent incidents of plagiarism, most notably those involving the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. His



book, *Plagiarism and the Culture War*, operates on four levels: as a scholarly investigation into whether King plagiarized his 1955 Boston University doctoral dissertation; as an inquiry into the conduct of the guardians of the King legacy (Stanford University historian Clayborne Carson, the King family, et al.); as a study of the academic-publishing-media image complex that connived with the guardians to cover up the scandal; and as a brief history of plagiarism, from its 18th century origins to its present status in an academic world lacking intellectual integrity.

Pappas emphasizes that Martin King, as the younger King was known, was a great and courageous though flawed human being. However, in recent years an idolatrous movement has developed that has implicitly removed King from the ranks of the human.

Pappas shows that King's compulsive coveting of other men's words went back at least to his undergraduate days at Atlanta's Morehouse College, and continued at Crozer Theological Seminary and Boston University. "King's plagiarisms grow more sweeping with each year he progresses in higher education." Ultimately, King stole the most dramatic passages of his speech, "I Have a Dream," from an address by the Rev. Archibald Carey at the 1952 Republican Convention.

Pappas prints extensive parallel excerpts from King's student papers at Morehouse, on through his Boston University doctoral dissertation, and their

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sources. BU officials eventually admitted that King had pilfered one-third of his dissertation from Jack Stewart Boozer's 1952 Boston University dissertation. But first the predominantly white, politically diverse Friends of Martin went on the offensive: They lied, denied, and sought to silence the whistleblowers.

From 1987-90, Clayborne Carson, director of the King Papers Project, deliberately misled journalists. And instead of simply comparing the dissertations in his own school's library, Boston University President Jon Westling unquestioningly accepted Carson's claims, insisting in 1990 that "not a single instance of plagiarism of any sort has been identified."

Mainstream media outlets, including the *New York Times, New Republic, Washington Post,* and *Atlanta Journal/ Constitution*, sat on the story for a year, and only ran it after a mealy-mouthed report appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, one year after the British *Sunday Telegraph* had told the entire story.

And then there is Keith Miller. A white composition instructor at Arizona State University, Miller espouses a theory of "voice merging," which holds that blacks cannot commit plagiarism, because the black oral tradition does not recognize intellectual property rights, and that King merely took the words of white men in order to make himself intelligible and acceptable to white audiences.

As Pappas points out, MLK believed in intellectual property rights; he had taken a course at BU devoted to plagiarism and scholarly standards; he copyrighted his plagiarized speeches; and Miller provides no evidence that King saw himself as part of the "tradition" that Miller has posited. There is no "voice merging" tradition; Keith Miller made it up, with its attendant revision of black American history, with the sole and explicit purpose of rescuing King's scholarly reputation.

Pappas suggests that the young King escaped apprehension due to either an early form of affirmative action or his professors' laziness and incompetence. And that was back in the good old days. As Thomas Sowell recently noted, the title "full professor" may need to be replaced with "empty professor." After spending my first year teaching college (1992-93) buried in plagiarized term papers, I stopped assigning take-home papers. In six years as an instructor, I have never heard of a student being disciplined for plagiarism. Many students fail to comprehend the very concept. They understand only that copying from influential authors without attribution brings *A*s from most instructors, while angering others. Today's colleges have in effect institutionalized a "don't ask, don't tell" policy regarding plagiarism.

Nicholas Stix is a writer in Queens, New York.

A HALF-BAKED GENERATION

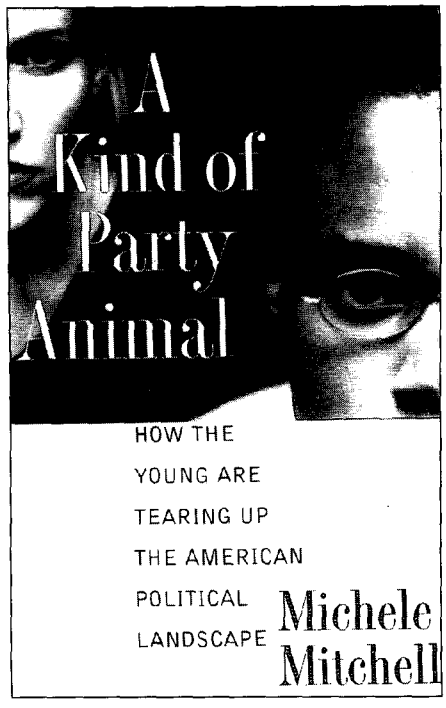
By Clay Waters

A New Kind of Party Animal
By Michele Mitchell
Simon & Schuster, 224 pages, $23

At 28, Michelle Mitchell is already a veteran political writer: the youngest person to serve as a communications director on Capitol Hill, the youngest to write for the *New York Times* editorial page. *A New Kind of Party Animal*, Mitchell's first book, deserves credit for shunning that awful "Generation X" sobriquet (she prefers the term "18-35"). She doesn't indulge in the usual marketing cliches of the Xers: No cigar poses or leopard miniskirts here, just a too-hip title that is guaranteed to age gracelessly.

Mitchell identifies the 18-35 age group as a fiscally conservative, socially inclusive (read: pro-choice) bunch, savvy, technoliterate, and resistant to hype. In this brief book she follows seven of them from across the country, working around bureaucracies, eschewing partisanship, getting things done. In Chicago, Jerry Morrison tries to break that city's notorious political machine. In California, Kim Alexander sets up a Web site listing the campaign donations made to the state legislature.

Party Animal suffers from a jumpy style that reads like a screen of Internet hotlinks, skipping from point to point. Statements are followed by anecdotes that sometimes veer far off the subject. But the book is refreshingly free of dark warnings of intergenerational warfare that make others in its



genre, like *Revolution X*, look so ludicrous now. Sometimes Mitchell's cynical shots achieve sublime wisdom, as in this snapshot of the pre-Internet media: "National news was what Cronkite chose to pass along to everyone else from his hometown newspaper (the *New York Times*)."

But the book's policy goofs show that in some areas Mitchell is still in thrall to Washington's conventional wisdom: She claims California's property tax-limiting Proposition 13 devastated public schools, when in fact spending per student has since risen by one-third (from $3,046 to $4,200 in constant dollars). She calls welfare reform "draconian" and claims the Republicans' 1994 budget plan "sold children out" by converting the school lunch program into block grants, ignoring that the plan would have increased lunch funding.

Mitchell goes out of her way to make her generation look good. She notes approvingly that the 18-35 group is the most skeptical about Bill Clinton as a role model. She demands her peers be respected both because they turned out in record numbers in 1992 and because they didn't turn out in 1996. In the end, Mitchell is no more sure about this age group than we are. Perhaps in the future the people she chronicles will have compelling stories to relate. As of now, this book seems half-baked, unfinished. Maybe it's just too early to write a history of her generation.

Clay Waters is an analyst at the Media Research Center in Alexandria, Virginia.

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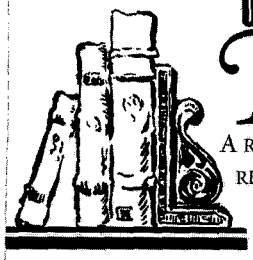

off The Shelf

A REGULAR REVIEW OF CLASSIC, OVER-LOOKED, NEWLY RELEVANT, OR OTHERWISE DESERVING OLDER BOOKS

CON-FUSION

By Martin Morse Wooster

It Usually Begins With Ayn Rand
By Jerome Tuccille, 1971.

When writing about conservatives, intelligent liberal commentators like E. J. Dionne or John Judis will announce that the Right is now an uneasy coalition of libertarians interested in free markets and social conservatives who wish to make America a moral nation, and that this temporary alliance will inevitably collapse in a fractious intellectual civil war.

But the tricky collaboration between Americans devoted to limited government and those most concerned with traditional virtues actually goes back many decades. If you want to understand how these two factions of the Right differ, yet endure in opposition to the Left, an excellent place to start is by reading Jerome Tuccille's *It Usually Begins With Ayn Rand.*

Tuccille hasn't been active in politics recently, but he was a major libertarian voice in the 1960s and 1970s. *It Usually Begins* is an account of people who discovered the Right in the 1950s, when "benevolent father figure" Dwight D. Eisenhower ruled a serene America, where corporate drones spasmodically inched upwards, striving to gain a quarter-acre spread in a railroad suburb and the key to the executive suite. "This was the age of giant bombs, giant nations, corporations, unions, giant and unfathomable political issues," Tuccille writes. "Individualism was obsolete in this era of the Organization Man, the Man in the Gray Flannel Suit, the Suburban Sprawl and the Super Highway."

Tuccille's memoir begins with an account of Ayn Rand's circle in the late 1950s, and climaxes with a failed effort in 1971 of anarcho-libertarians to unite with the New Left in a grand anti-government coalition.

There are two reasons why Tuccille's account remains fresh and valuable. First, he is an excellent stylist, who has superb control of the techniques of the New Journalism of the period. People who like Tom Wolfe's writing will find Tuccille an enjoyable companion.

Second, Tuccille knows that political debates are often comic, and he has a great deal of fun lampooning the nuts and flakes who enjoy screaming at political meetings and using their crayons to scrawl exclamation-studded letters to the editor. My favorite Tuccille story concerns the gentleman who was a disciple of Andrew Joseph Galambos. Galambos, a now-forgotten libertarian guru of the 1960s, had allegedly solved all of the mysteries of politics and economics, but his system was proprietary and could only be outlined with Galambos's permission (which he never gave). Only two things about Galambos's ideas were clear—that Galambos was the only one who could explain them, and that he and Ayn Rand had, after a five-minute conversation, declared each other insane. Not surprisingly, "Galambosianism," whatever it was, is now extinct.

At the core of Tuccille's comic inferno are three strong-minded, important right-wing figures—Frank Meyer, Karl Hess, and Murray Rothbard. Meyer, whose *In Defense of Freedom* (1962) attempted a fusion of libertarian and conservative ideas, comes across as an anti-sectarian man of reason whose voice was scarcely heard in a highly sectarian time. Karl Hess, in the course of the book, transforms himself from Barry Goldwater speechwriter to New Left stalwart looking for a barricade to storm. At one 1969 speech, Tuccille recalls, Hess "looked like a nicely balanced mixture of General U.S. Grant and Fidel Castro as he strode to the platform, his knotty black curls bunched behind his ears, a frizzy coal-black beard covering most of his face."

As for Murray Rothbard, Tuccille reinforces the opinion many had of him—that when not writing such important books as *For a New Liberty* and *Conceived in Liberty*, Rothbard's chief delight was his self-appointed role as the Lenin of libertarianism, hunting down heretics (real or imaginary) and expelling them. (In 1988, Rothbard invented "paleo-libertarianism," which in retrospect was a philosophy whose principal purpose was to enable Rothbard to condemn 99 percent of the libertarian movement as deviationists.)

We see a lot of Murray Rothbard in *It Usually Begins With Ayn Rand*, starting in the 1950s, when Rothbard is expelled from Rand's inner circle for having a Christian wife, not being a smoker, and for tiring of hearing Rand mispronounce his name as "Rossbott." And in the late 1960s, according to Tuccille, the tentative alliance between the New Left and libertarians largely collapsed because of Rothbard's eagerness to kick out apostates. "The right-wing deviationists are walking around with their goddamn dollar signs plastered all over the place," Rothbard is quoted as saying at one conference, "and the left-wing deviationists are destroying what's left of their brains with acid and pot."

It's only in his last chapter, when Tuccille turns from reporter into pundit, that his book becomes dated. Tuccille argued that, in the 1970s, the leading libertarian politician would be, of all people, Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.). His prediction of a massive tax revolt was also misguided.

The most valuable lesson Tuccille provides in *It Usually Begins With Ayn Rand* is that, while debating about ideas is important, sectarianism is silly and a waste of time and energy. Reading Tuccille, I was reminded of one of H.L. Mencken's maxims—"Remember, your opponent is just as smart and decent as you are—and may very well be right."

Associate editor Martin Morse Wooster, a fusionist, is polite to everyone.

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EDITED BY MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER

the Digest

SUMMARIES OF IMPORTANT NEW RESEARCH FROM THE NATION'S UNIVERSITIES, THINK TANKS, AND INVESTIGATIVE PUBLICATIONS

POLITICS

Don't Ruin the Census

Kenneth Darga, "Straining Out Gnats and Swallowing Camels: The Perils of Adjusting for Census Undercount." Office of the State Demographer, Michigan Department of Management and Budget, P.O. Box 30026, Lansing, Michigan 48909.

There's a contentious debate in Congress about whether the 2000 Census should try to count every American, as in the past, or instead estimate the size of the population through a process known as "statistical sampling." Advocates of sampling argue that many Americans (chiefly minorities) are undercounted by the Census, and so it should be adjusted by estimates based on sampling techniques.

Kenneth Darga, a demographer for the state of Michigan, emphatically disapproves of sampling. If the Census relies on estimates instead of head counts, the change will "have an adverse effect upon nearly all purposes for which Census data are used."

After every census, the Census Bureau uses "demographic analysis" to estimate how accurate they were in counting Americans. The Bureau estimates that the 1990 Census failed to count 1.8 percent, or about 5 million people, and underestimated the African-American population by 5.7 percent. If true, this margin of error is quite small, when one considers how many Americans do not want the government to know where they live. There are, Darga points out, about 1 million people who don't pay child support, about 5 million illegal immigrants, and about 14 million people who are arrested every year by the police for non-traffic violations.

To "correct" the 2000 Census, the Bureau proposes to take a second survey in selected parts of the country. Such samples would be used to create national population estimates. But there's no evidence that the "drug dealers, fugitives, and illegal immigrants" who threw away the initial Census questionnaire will truthfully tell a government investigator conducting the second survey who they are or where they live. Many more errors could occur among people who have moved, or households where one family member filled out the Census survey the first time and another member gave different responses to the second survey.

Darga demonstrates how definite errors occurred in the experimental sampling study that was done after the 1990 Census. If, after the 2000 Census, "corrections" are made to the official count based on the same sampling technique, these sorts of predictable errors will result in numerous spurious adjustments to state and local numbers, as well as to politically sensitive race statistics.

Sampling simply does not improve the accuracy of minority population counts, and using it to "correct" the Census "would utterly destroy" the credibility of Census numbers.

Americans on The Sunny Side

Everett Carll Ladd and Karlyn H. Bowman, What's Wrong: A Survey of American Satisfaction and Complaint. *AEI Press, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.*

We often hear press reports that a rising number of Americans are disgusted with life. Yet Everett Carll Ladd of the University of Connecticut and Karlyn Bowman of the American Enterprise Institute say polls indicate most Americans are generally content. While acknowledging some day-to-day problems we express "profound and deep satisfactions" as well.

Polls consistently show most Americans enjoy living in the United States. Only about 10 percent of those polled by Gallup want to live in another country. By a 70-30 margin, people tell the Pew Research Center that Americans "can always find a way to solve our problems."

About 10 percent of Americans say they are not too happy—steady for the past 50 years—while the remaining 90 percent say they are "pretty" or "very" happy. About 70 percent believe their chances of achieving the good life are "fairly" or "very" high, while an additional 6 percent say they have already achieved a good life. Ever since the U.S. economy began expanding in 1982, fewer than one in ten Americans have believed their life will be worse in future years. (In contrast, during the recession years of 1973-74, about 25 percent of Americans thought their life would worsen.)

Ladd and Bowman stress that Americans are primarily dissatisfied with government. Only 2 percent of Americans say they are enthusiastic about government, while about 10 percent say they are

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angry. The remainder do not fear government but are skeptical of it.

People's distrust of the state is increasing. The proportion who say politicians "don't care about the problems of the average man" has risen from 59 percent in 1973 to 75 percent in 1994. A 1959 Gallup survey reported that 15 percent of Americans thought big business was the largest threat to the country, 41 percent said big labor, and 14 percent big government. By 1994, 24 percent feared big business most, 9 percent big labor, while those fearing big government most rose to 64 percent.

Overall, Ladd and Bowman find, Americans remain confident, but rising unease with state power ensures little support for government expansion. "The public is less receptive to calls for more government," they write, "and more in favor of prudent curbs on government's role than in the years of the New Deal and the Great Society."

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

Falling Prices

W. Michael Cox and Richard G. Alm, "Buying Time," in Reason *(August/September 1998), 3415 South Sepulveda Boulevard #400, Los Angeles, California 90034.*

The average American home has items that would have been unimaginable luxuries a generation ago, including VCRs, personal computers, and cellular phones. The reason such goods are affordable, argue Michael Cox of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and Richard Alm of the *Dallas Morning News,* is that our market economy provides enormous incentives for manufacturers to become more productive.

The best way to measure prices is to calculate how much time a worker earning the average hourly wage would take to buy a particular item. For example, when long-distance telephone service first became available in 1915, a three-minute call from New York to San Francisco cost approximately 90 hours' work at the average wage. Today, the same call costs less than two minutes of work. Similarly, a 12-inch color TV cost three months' wages in 1954, while today's 25-inch model costs only three days' wages.

Prices have also fallen on non-luxury items. A chicken, for example, took two hours and 37 minutes to earn in 1919; today the average worker can buy one after 14 minutes' work. In the same period the price of a half-gallon of milk fell from 39 minutes to seven.

On the other hand, some products have risen in cost. For example, the average price of a house has risen substantially. But the average home also has features (central air conditioning, a garage, an extra bathroom) that were rare or non-existent when our parents and grandparents lived, which complicates comparisons in housing costs. Medical costs have also risen but, again, today's doctors use high-tech devices not available in the past.

There are limits to how far prices can fall. Cox and Alm warn we'll never have free long-distance telephone service, for instance. But it's likely new products will continue to be introduced, and that their prices will fall dramatically as manufacturers become more innovative and efficient. Our children will almost certainly buy better goods at lower prices.

Los Millionarios

Tyce Palmaffy, "El Millonario Next Door," in Policy Review *(July/August 1998), Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.*

Debate over immigration continues, but it's clear many immigrants arrive here willing to work hard. Tyce Palmaffy of *Policy Review* reports that many Hispanic arrivals demonstrate "a penchant for risk-taking, and a willingness to sacrifice and work hard in pursuit of a better life."

According to the Census Bureau, from 1987-92 the number of Hispanic-owned businesses rose from 490,000 to 863,000, while these firms' sales increased from $32.8 billion to $76 billion. The U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce estimates that by 1997 Hispanics owned 1.3 million businesses that generated more than $200 billion in sales.

Hispanics are not yet as entrepreneurial as other ethnic groups. Though they constitute 11 percent of the population, the Census Bureau reports they own only 5 percent of U.S. businesses, mostly small ones. But Palmaffy notes that Hispanic entrepreneurs are reviving many blighted areas. In Los Angeles, Hispanic-owned stores are occupying spaces vacated by blacks after the 1992 riots. In Chicago, the only business district generating more sales taxes than Latin-dominated 26th Street is Michigan Avenue, the city's poshest section.

Many Hispanic enterprises make productive use of ethnicity. In Miami, for example, Chilean immigrant Rafael Puga used connections in his homeland to create Beagle Products, importing $20 million of fresh sea bass, salmon, and swordfish from Chile and Costa Rica each year. But "for every Hispanic businessman leveraging his ethnicity," Palmaffy reports, "there are dozens whose ethnicity has nothing to do with their business." In Denver, for instance, the Quintana sisters created Excel Professional Services, a computer consulting firm with $22 million in sales that solves problems for such clients as Lucent Technologies and Time Warner.

If Hispanic businesses are to succeed, they should avoid being tempted by government contracts and politicians eager to win votes with affirmative action schemes. "Fortunately," says Palmaffy, "Hispanics generally seem far more intent on self-reliance than on playing racial politics."

Convention Follies

Heywood T. Sanders, "Convention Center Follies," in The Public Interest *(Summer 1998), 1112 16th Street N.W. #540, Washington, D.C. 20036.*

Throughout America, cities are pinning their hopes for economic growth on convention centers. In recent years, new or expanded convention centers in Atlantic City, Boston, New Orleans, Orlando, San Francisco, Seattle, and elsewhere caused convention center acreage to rise from 6.5 million square feet in 1969 to 24 million square feet today. But Heywood T. Sanders of Trinity University thinks convention centers are a bad investment. Typically, "convention centers deliver far less than promised."

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City officials often argue that new convention centers are necessary to generate more tourism business, and that failing to expand convention centers means losing business to cities with larger and newer facilities. Little evidence supports either proposition. In Washington, D.C., for example, planners predicted convention delegates would purchase 1.5 million rooms in city hotels each year after the city's new convention center opened in 1983. But from 1987-97, only 20 percent of the predicted business occurred.

Convention centers fail to generate as much business as claimed for several reasons. In particular, many conventions are regional trade shows whose attendees either commute or stay just one night instead of several. Researchers at the University of Rhode Island found that most people using Providence's convention center were locals, and so the center generated only 25 percent of the hotel business predicted. The result: Taxpayers must pay for the convention center's losses.

Big-city mayors like convention centers because county, state, or federal assistance can frequently be relied on to build them. But Sanders warns that convention center construction will not restore decaying urban business districts. "For all of the public dollars spent, few cities appear to have been saved by larger convention centers."

SOCIETY

Confirming the Hazards of Divorce

Andrew J. Cherlin, P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale, and Christine McRae, "Effects of Parental Divorce on Mental Health Throughout the Life Course," in American Sociological Review *(April 1998), American Sociological Association, 1722 N Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.*

Sociologists Andrew Cherlin and Christine McRae of Johns Hopkins University and P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale of the University of Chicago have found new evidence that divorce causes lasting psychological damage to children. They analyzed the National Child Development Study in Britain, focusing on approximately 18,000 children born in the first week of March 1958.

Children whose parents divorced when the children were aged 7-22 were 11 percent more likely to suffer "a wide variety of adult emotional disorders, such as depression, anxiety, phobias, and obsessions," with the likelihood of such problems doubling as the children entered adulthood. By the time these children reached age 33, they were 25 percent more likely to have emotional problems than children whose parents stayed married.

Statistical analyses, the authors argue, show that the harm divorce causes is not due to the income, race, or social status of the parents but to "divorce itself." The British data suggest "the life courses of individuals whose parents divorce continue to diverge in adulthood from the life courses of those whose parents do not divorce."

Save Our School Budgets: Keep Classes Big

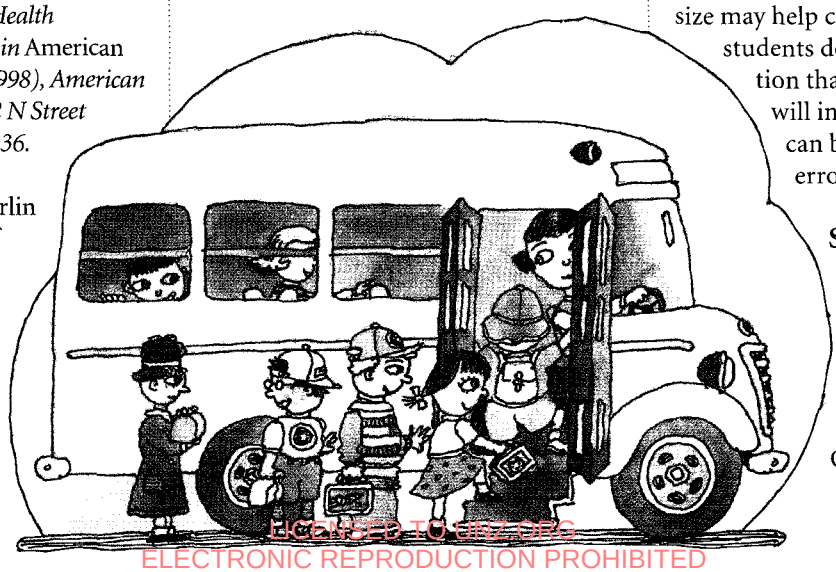
Eric A. Hanushek, The Evidence on Class Size. *W. Allen Wallis Institute of Political Economy, 107 Harkness Hall, University of Rochester, P.O. Box 270158, Rochester, New York 14627.*

The Clinton administration wants to launch a massive program to reduce class size in public schools by using federal funds to hire thousands more teachers. While Congress debates this proposal, states are already using their own funds to lower teacher-pupil ratios. Eric Hanushek of the University of Rochester thinks such programs will do little to help students: "The most notable feature of policies to reduce class sizes will be a dramatic increase in the costs of schooling, an increase unaccompanied by achievement gains." After all, Hanushek notes, student-teacher ratios have fallen considerably in past decades without causing any rise in test scores.

Hanushek examined 277 studies comparing class size to student performance. Of these studies, fully 72 percent found changing class size had no effect on student achievement; another 13 percent found reducing class size led to students doing *worse*. Only 15 percent of the studies found that a shrinking classroom led to student improvement.

Advocates of spending more on class-size reduction often cite Project STAR, a multi-year study conducted in the mid-1980s that compared two groups of students from kindergarten through third grade. Students randomly assigned to classes with 14-16 students appeared to do better than those in classes with 22-24 students, but Hanushek finds the study had many flaws. Teachers, parents, and principals knew they were being studied. Teachers knew a favorable result could lead to class-size reductions. Many parents had their children transferred in the middle of the study to the smaller class, ensuring the two groups weren't really chosen randomly. Other parents transferred their students out of the experimental classroom while Project STAR was in progress, casting further doubt on the testing sample.

At best, Hanushek argues, education research has shown that reducing class size may help certain elementary school students do better, but "the assertion that student performance will increase if only class sizes can be reduced is generally erroneous."



Save Our School Budgets: Restore Local Control

William A. Fischel, "How Judges Are Making Public Schools Worse," in City Journal *(Summer*

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1998), Manhattan Institute, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, New York 10017.

Last December, the New Hampshire Supreme Court ruled that the state's system of financing schools primarily through local property taxes was unconstitutional, making New Hampshire the twentieth state where courts have mandated equal school spending. Yet according to Dartmouth's William Fischel, ending local control of school finance has "failed to improve the quality of education in any state where it has been imposed."

The notion that state governments, not localities, should pay for public schools originated with the California Supreme Court, which ruled in 1971 that allowing school districts to spend differing amounts on education violated the equal protection clause of the California state constitution. The California legislature responded by finding methods to redistribute tax revenues so poor districts could spend as much as wealthier ones. The voters, though, preferred tax relief to having their property taxes spent on distant schools and voted overwhelmingly for Proposition 13, which slashed property taxes in 1978.

Some advocates of equal school spending suggest that instead of having state governments pay for public schools, better-off school districts can boost their own taxes and pass on a portion of the money collected to less-fortunate districts. But there is no evidence of this happening. In Vermont, rich districts have cut their own school spending, rather than subsidize other districts.

Teachers unions support state financing of public schools because it enables unions to bypass local voters, who scrutinize school budgets closely. Also, many on the left dislike local control of political institutions.

Fischel argues that mandating equal school spending will ensure that localities can't experiment with ways to pay for schools and that legislatures will no longer produce innovative ideas for aiding low-income districts. By contrast, permitting local control of school spending encourages educational choice: "For the majority of American families, public-school competition is a reality wherever schools are allowed to be locally financed."

SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

Mismanaging Public Lands

Holly Lippke Fretwell, Public Lands: The Price We Pay. *PERC, 502 South 19th Avenue #211, Bozeman, Montana 59715.*

When the federal government manages land, it incurs enormous losses. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service currently manage 456 million acres—20 percent of all U.S. land. From 1994-96 these agencies lost hundreds of millions of dollars on timber sales, grazing fees, and recreation uses.

Yet Western states have long turned the lands they manage into profitable enterprises, reports Holly Lippke Fretwell of PERC. Between 1994 and 1996, Forest Service land returned 30 cents in revenue for every dollar spent, BLM land 94 cents. But in the ten Western states Fretwell studied, state-owned lands returned $5.56 for every dollar spent.

Fretwell offers several explanations why states are better land managers than Washington:

• *Accountability.* Revenues generated by federal land managers do not return to the agencies but are sent to the Treasury. State land managers, by contrast, fund their budgets and other agencies (mainly schools) from income their lands generate—a powerful incentive to increase revenue. While state land managers must carefully account for spending, investigations by the General Accounting Office have found that the Forest Service does not know how much its assets are worth or how much it actually spends on various activities.

• *Efficiency.* States spend less on their lands and earn more from them. In Oregon, for example, the state spent two-thirds less on its forests than the BLM did, while earning nearly three times as much on timber revenue.

• *Innovation.* State land managers can quickly adapt to change. When fire devastated 185,000 acres of central Washington forests in summer 1994, state foresters quickly cut the remaining timber, earning good prices in spring sales. The U.S. Forest Service, by contrast, let much of their burned timber in the same area rot before it was finally sold at a greatly reduced price.

Fretwell urges federal land managers to copy their successful state counterparts and asks Congress to require that BLM and Forest Service budgets be funded from the revenues generated by public lands. "With the right incentives," she writes, "our federal land management agencies could be a source of wealth to all Americans, not the burden we have allowed them to become."

OTHER COUNTRIES

Property Matters

Tom Bethell, The Noblest Triumph: Property and Prosperity Through the Ages. *St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10010.*

Author Tom Bethell reports that few things foster economic development more than protection of private property. His study provides many examples where the lack of broad and secure property ownership has increased poverty and reduced opportunities for the poor to better themselves.

Consider the potato famine that ravaged Ireland in the 1840s. The same potato blight affected many countries, including Belgium and the Netherlands, but they fared far less badly. It's not that Ireland was overpopulated; Wales had more people per square mile. Ireland's problem, Bethell argues, lay not in disease or human crowding but in property ownership. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, English Protestants seized lands from their Irish Catholic owners and dispersed them among favored aristocrats. So most peasants became mere tenants on the land, with no incentive to make improvements. Their landlords were also in poor shape, since many acquired Irish lands during the inflationary era of the Napoleonic Wars. After Napoleon's defeat, Britain returned to the gold standard, which produced deflation that drastically reduced the value of Irish estates and the

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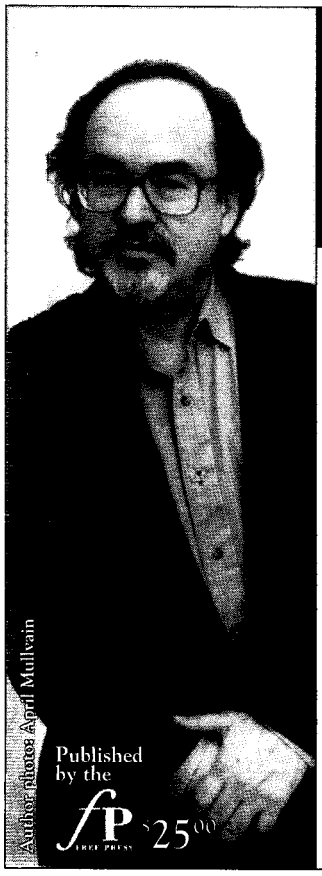
crops they produced. Landlords attempted to recover by steadily raising rents, leaving Ireland "destitute and on the brink of starvation, needing only the potato blight to trigger the catastrophe."

Lack of private property also explains the extreme volatility of many Arab nations, Bethell contends. Historian Bernard Lewis has written that while Islamic law allows private property to exist, even a powerful person's property has never been safe from seizure by the state. In much of the Arab world, religious courts "froze" Islamic law in the fifteenth century. At the time, courts allowed private property only for farmers who lived on their land and developed it for several years. Absentee ownership was banned as well as rent. Thus most Arab peasants decided to remain nomads, since it could take years of investment to prove to a religious court that property had been developed to the extent required for ownership. Peasants preferred investing in things they could own—such as camels and goats—and so pursued a pastoral life. Thus the land no one can own remains a desert today.

Lack of property rights also explains why Third World "land reform" efforts of the 1950s and '60s largely failed. Western development experts argued that the best way to fight Communism was for governments to seize large amounts of private property and then disburse it to grateful peasants. But in nearly every case, this sort of land reform was a flop. In Chile, Christian Democratic and Marxist governments seized about half of Chile's farms between 1965 and 1973. The expropriated farmers were paid in bonds not indexed to inflation. Peasants were not given the land; instead, they were forced to join state-owned, Communist-controlled collectives. As a result, productivity slumped, and inflation wiped out the capital of former landlords. Overnight Chile turned from a major food exporter to a nation reliant on U.S. food subsidies.

A similar process occurred in South Vietnam. U.S. development experts seized property from 200,000 landlords who owned about 60 percent of South Vietnam's land. Landlords took their downpayments and fled. The new "owners" could not sell their property for 15 years. The result: Property markets collapsed, the price of rice quadrupled between 1971-74, and landlords—the primary supporters of South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu—no longer generated wealth. "It is possible," Bethell writes, "that South Vietnam was crucially destabilized" by land reform, ensuring the swift conquest by North Vietnam in 1975.

The only land reforms that proved successful were in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, where peasants were turned into property owners, not wards of the state. In most cases, Bethell believes development experts bent on "land reform" tried to use "Leninist means to achieve Jeffersonian ends." And by destroying private property, these experts only made Third World nations worse off.



FROM THE AUTHOR OF RADICAL SON

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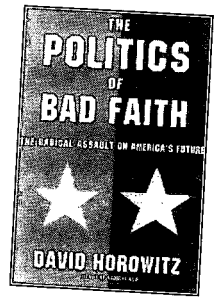
THE RADICAL ASSAULT ON AMERICA'S FUTURE

BY DAVID HOROWITZ

This elegant, insightful work ought to be widely read as a necessary corrective to the most dangerous moral disease of our times.
—Robert Bork

David Horowitz brilliantly critiques the religion of radicalism and insightfully shows how 1960s thinking echoed that of the 1660s—the false messianic hopes of Shabbtai Zvi—and morphed into the AIDS death mask.
—Marvin Olasky

A passionate and insightful book.
—Francis Fukuyama



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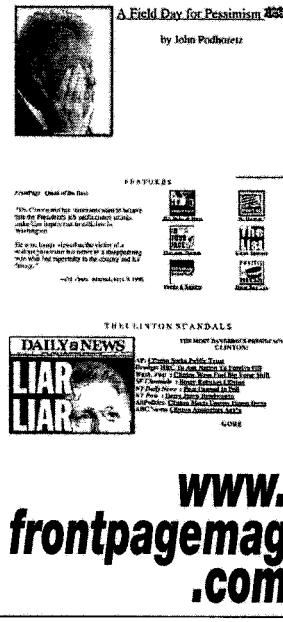

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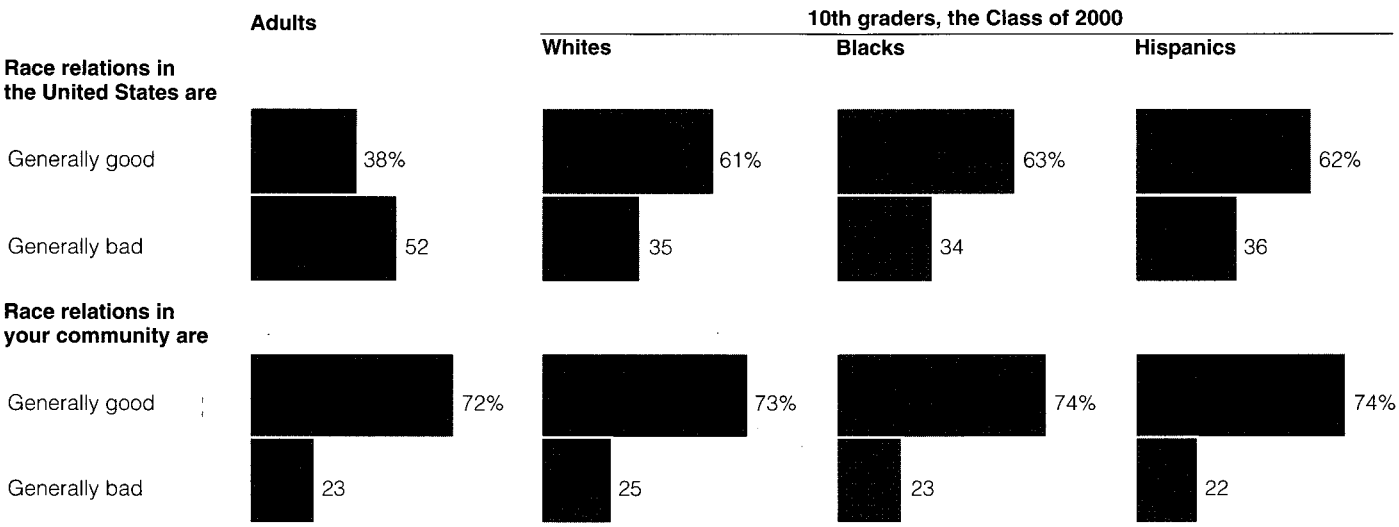
Opinion Pulse

EDITED BY KARLYN BOWMAN

GETTING BEYOND RACE

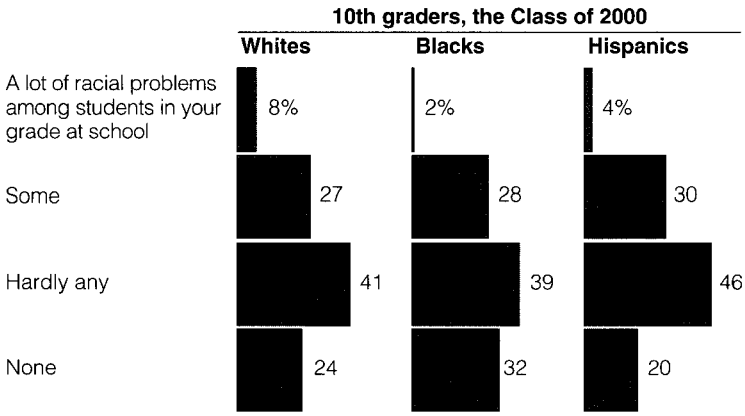
The surveys on the next four pages look at the views of teens, parents, and professionals on race. A hopeful sign is that white, black, and Hispanic teenagers are much more positive than adults about race relations in the nation. Both teens and adults are very positive about race relations in the place they know best: their own communities. Fewer than 10 percent of white, black, and Hispanic teens say that there are a lot racial problems in their schools. Twenty-three percent of black teens say they have been a victim of discrimination; 53 percent of black adults say they have.

Question: **Do you think...?**



Source: Surveys by CBS News, June 1997 (adults) and September 1997 (10th graders).

Question: **Would you say there are...?**



In another question in the poll, just 2 percent of members of the Class of 2000 said "racism" was the biggest problem facing people their age. By comparison, 43 percent said drugs were the biggest problem, followed by violence/crime/gangs, cited by 15 percent.

Source: Survey by CBS News, January 1997.

Question: **Have you yourself ever been a victim of discrimination because you are black?**

Source: Survey by Yankelovich Partners for *Time* and CNN, September–October, 1997.

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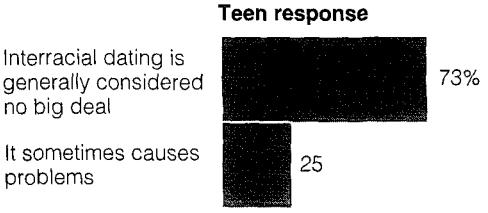
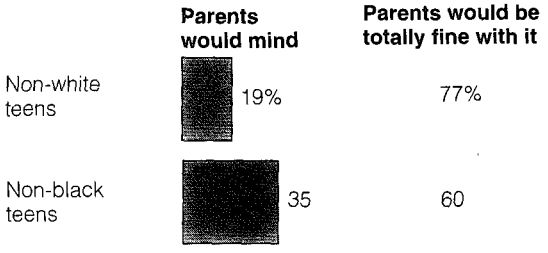
Teens today say that interracial dating is "no big deal." Large majorities say their parents don't have a problem with it either. Black teens are less likely than black adults to say that blacks' problems are caused primarily by discrimination. They are also less likely than black adults to believe that blacks don't have opportunities to escape poverty. By two to one, black adults and teens alike say that a failure to take advantage of available opportunities is more of a problem than discrimination by whites.

Question: **Next we have a few questions about dating that goes on in your school, including when males and females go out with each other alone or in a group. First, we'd like you to think about the reaction students in your school have when two people of different racial backgrounds are dating or going out with each other. Is...?**



Note: Seventy-five percent of white teens, 66 percent of black teens, and 75 percent of Hispanic teens said this was generally no big deal.
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, October 1997.

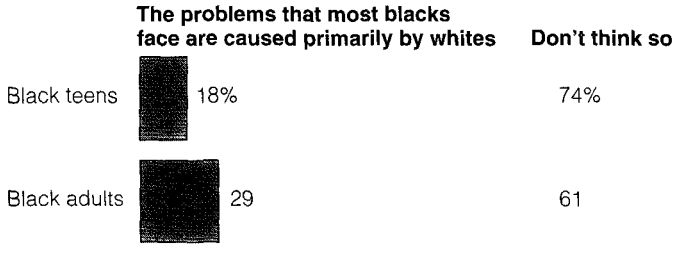
Question: **How do you think your parents would react if you dated someone who was [of another race]?**



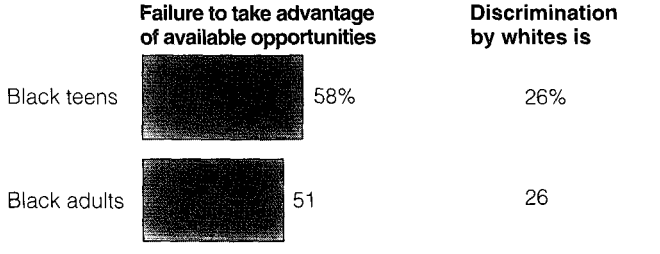
Note: In a January 1997 CBS News poll of 10th graders, 64 percent said their parents would not be bothered about interracial dating, and 8 percent thought their parents would be bothered. Virtually all of the teens who said their parents would be against interracial dating were white.
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, October, 1997.

What's Holding Blacks Back?

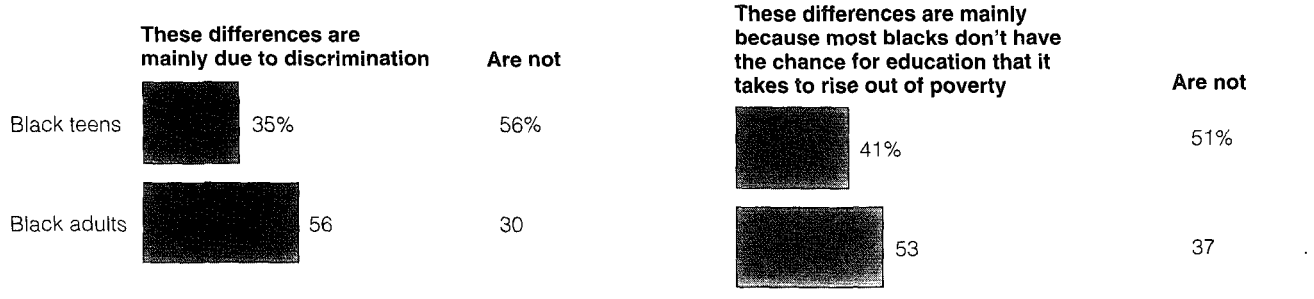
Question: **Do you think...?**



Question: **In your view, which of the following is more a problem?**



Question: **On average, black Americans have worse jobs, income and housing than white people. Do you think...?**



Source: Survey by Yankelovich Partners for *Time* and CNN, August 1997.

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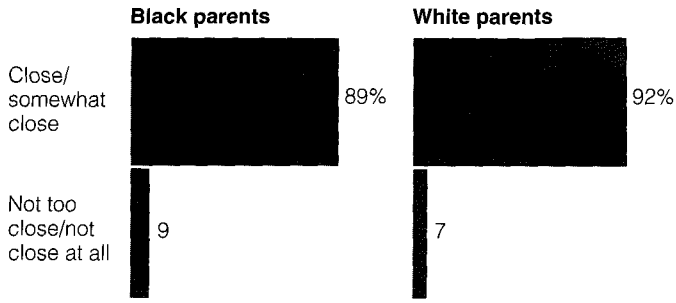
Black and White Parents

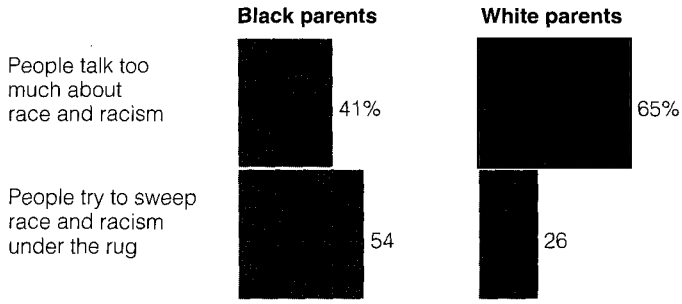
Black and white parents agree on a lot these days. Large majorities say that too much is made of racial differences and not enough of what whites and blacks have in common. A majority of black parents, however, say that people try to sweep racism under the rug. Substantial majorities of both groups want to focus more on raising academic achievement in the schools rather than diversity and integration. Black parents want the best teachers hired, regardless of their race.

Question: **How close does...come to your view?**

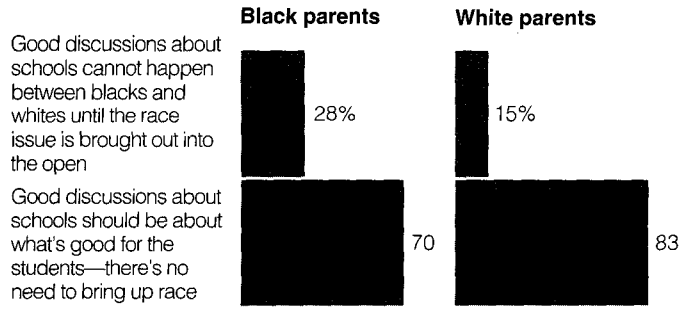
Too much is made of the differences between blacks and whites and not enough of what they have in common



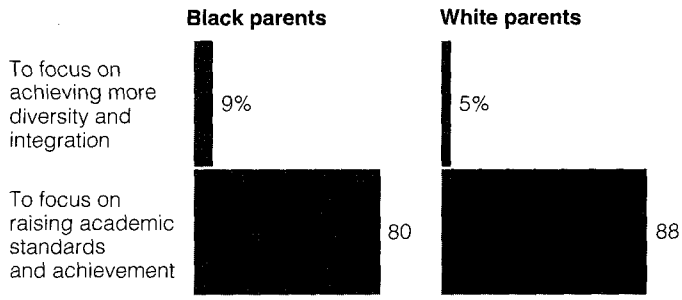
Question: **Do you think...?**



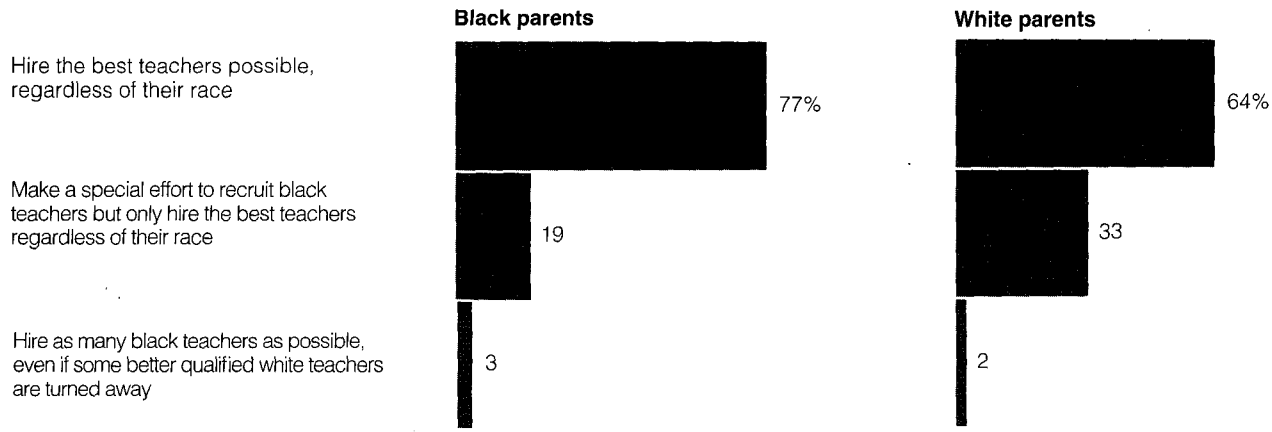
Question: **Which of the following comes closer to your view?**



Question: **What should be a bigger priority for the schools across the nation?**



Question: **What kind of teachers should a school district that is mostly black hire...?**



Note: The sample was 800 white and 800 black parents or guardians of children in kindergarten through twelfth grade.
Source: Survey by Public Agenda, March–April, 1998.

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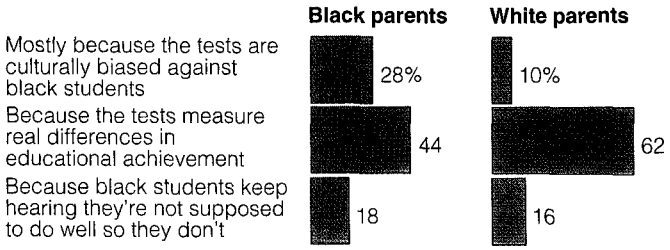
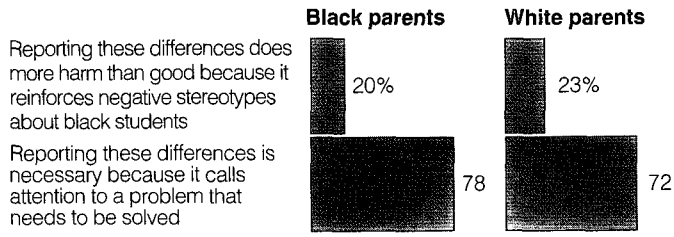
Most black and white parents do not attribute lower black student achievement test scores to cultural bias in the tests. Large majorities think reporting racial differences in achievement is necessary and helpful. Both sets of parents say private schools in their area do a better job than public ones. Finally, black professionals are optimistic about their own prospects and believe their employers make a genuine effort to invest in black employees. A majority of black professionals say most companies fall short on this score.

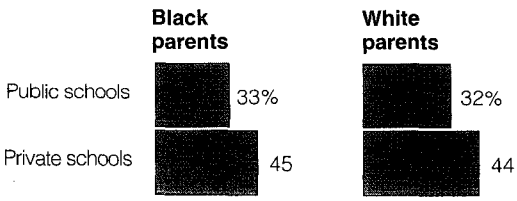
Question: **On average, black students don't do as well as whites on standardized achievement tests. Do you think this is...?**



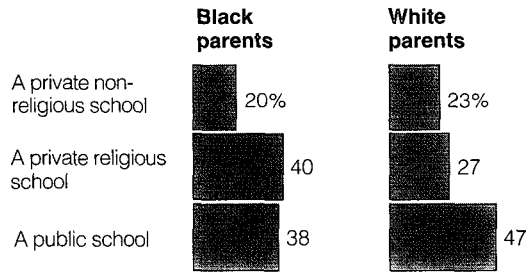
Question: **When it comes to school districts reporting differences in achievement between black and white students, which of these two statements is closer to your view...?**



Question: **In your area, which schools generally provide higher academic standards?**



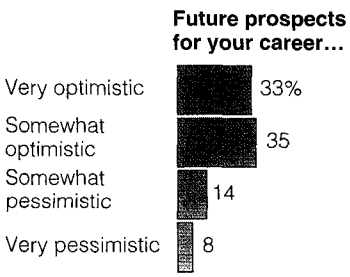
Question: **If you could afford it, would you rather your children attend...?**



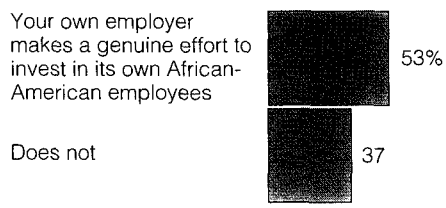
Note: Sample is 800 white and 800 black parents or guardians of children in kindergarten to twelfth grade.
Source: Survey by Public Agenda, March–April 1998.

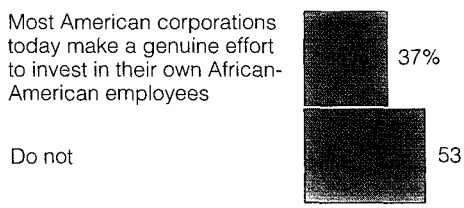
Black Professionals

Question: **How do you feel about...?**



Question: **In general, do you think...?**





Note: Sample is 750 African-American professionals or aspiring professionals.
Source: Survey by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies for *Fortune*, April–May, 1998.

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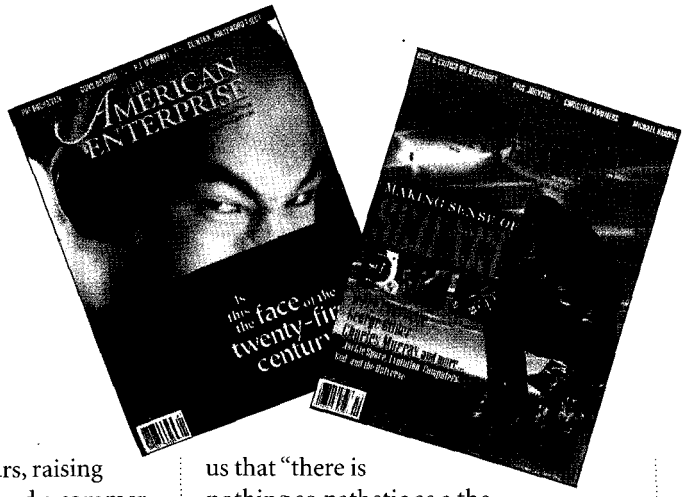
the Mail



In his not-so-tongue-in-cheek article (FLASHBACK, May/June), Bill Kauffman asserts that soccer is boring. To the contrary, I'd say that soccer is to football what chess is to tic-tac-toe. Moreover, football is played for ten seconds or so followed by 30 seconds of rest and planning, much like eighteenth-century European battles. Soccer is a continuous engagement of speed, endurance, and guile reminiscent of the stratagems of George Washington and Francis Marion.

When a soccer player encounters the ball coming his way, he must decide if he should play it or leave it for a teammate, head it, kick it while still in the air, or trap it. Except for the goalie, a soccer player will run at various intensities for most of each 45-minute half.

The specialization and ingenuity required in football is similar to that of the post office or other union job site. The requirements of soccer are more like those of an entrepreneurial business.

Dale Anema
Littleton, Colorado

I've just read Karl Zinsmeister's May/June article on day care. It is superb! The ideal conditions for giving a child a fine start in life, as uncovered in my research, are very different from those that exist in substitute care. I wish we had more hard evidence on the subject, but we don't. In the meantime, what you have done with the indirect and anecdotal evidence is the best I've seen.

Dr. Burton White
Center for Parent Education

I am writing to express my deep personal gratitude to the writers and editors at *The American Enterprise* for the May/June issue on day care. I have been a mother at home for 23 years, raising six children. I have never read a commercial publication with such bliss as I did that issue. Amassing so many articles, each excellent, in one place was like a Thanksgiving harvest. How we stay-at-home mothers long for words of appreciation for the fact that we are irreplaceable to the children we devote ourselves to every day.

I have been involved with the organization Mothers at Home for five years and have read thousands of articles sent to us by mothers, but your issue was a knock-out punch aimed straight at my heart. I hope it alerts parents to their powerful potential to change the world by subjugating personal ambition long enough to shape the next generation. All of us at Mothers at Home are grateful to you.

Margie Johnson
Mothers at Home

Iris Krasnow's "Discovering Motherhood" in the May/June issue on day care was a searing view of the inconsistencies of the so-called "great" women who minimized, undermined, and devalued motherhood. It is one of the most powerful pieces I've read in my life.

I also think the September/October issue on science should be a "must read" for any high school student about to face indoctrination by the science machine of our public schools. Dean Overman's "Not a Chance" is an armchair statistician's presentation of the impossibility that life originated by chance, and Daniel Mahoney's "Deadly Social Engineering" gives a tragic review of the millions who have died in the wake of socialist experiments.

Intelligent articles like these remind us that "there is nothing so pathetic as a theory that gets mugged by a gang of facts."

Steven Reyes
Novato, California

In "A Chinese Century?" (July/August), Joel Kotkin emphasizes the strength of the traditional Chinese extended family and argues that it will enable China to recover from her current economic problems and continue to grow.

On the other hand, almost every other China-related article in the issue referred to China's one-child policy. Steven Mosher noted that although the policy is brutally enforced, a major change in attitudes has occurred, so that even if the policy were relaxed, there would probably not be a return to large families.

If China's one-child policy is successful for two generations, a child will not only have no brothers or sisters, but also no aunts or uncles or cousins. What, then, will be left of the vaunted Chinese extended family? Only ancestors. In the future, this complex, close-knit family structure that has served Chinese businesses so well may be found only outside China.

Michael Sullivan
Lincoln, Nebraska

The American Enterprise should be congratulated for a balanced and illuminating reconsideration of Solzhenitsyn's "Harvard Address" on its twentieth anniversary (July/August). Nonetheless, some words of clarification are in order.

In his spirited contribution, Mark Steyn repeats long-discredited claims about Solzhenitsyn's "formal security fence" and his supposed hostility toward and isolation from his Vermont neigh-

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bors. In fact, the fence was a chain-link one and by no means a sophisticated security device. As David Remnick has reported, Solzhenitsyn had cordial relations with his Vermont neighbors and was twice greeted with standing ovations by them at Cavendish town meetings.

Like many of Solzhenitsyn's critics, Steyn woefully overstates the extent of the Russian author's self-imposed isolation. Solzhenitsyn addressed AFL-CIO conventions in Washington and New York in the summer of 1975. He also managed to give the Harvard commencement address in question, as well as travel to speak in Britain, Japan, Taiwan, France, Italy, and Liechtenstein.

Another inaccuracy: Even sympathetic critics such as John O'Sullivan ignore the extent to which Solzhenitsyn has come to agree with the sort of criticism of his Harvard Address expressed by your commentators. Without modifying his general philosophical perspective, Solzhenitsyn admitted in 1993 that he had understated the steadfastness of the West during the Cold War and exaggerated the strengthening of the soul in the East.

The most fantastic claim in TAE's symposium is made by John Lukacs, a brilliant and opinionated historian. He states that "like the Bourbons after Napoleon, Sozhenitsyn learned nothing and forgot nothing in the West." This, despite Solzhenitsyn's expressed admiration for Swiss and New England-style local self-government, and despite Solzhenityn's exhortation in his Liechtenstein Address that the West must never "lose sight of its own values, its historically unique stability of civil life under the rule of law."

Daniel J. Mahoney
Assumption College

After I read Dr. Joseph Jacobs'article on DDT (IN REAL LIFE, September/October), it was reported on today's news that about 9,000 cases of dengue fever and malaria have recently sprung up in Puerto Rico. After having disappeared in Latin America years ago, malaria is again a threat because DDT is no longer available—thanks to environmentalist pressure. This is a case of eco-terrorism, where politically correct U.S. authorities won't do anything until people start dying in Florida.

As a boy, I witnessed the miracle of DDT in Venezuela. A family friend was assigned by the Venezuelan government in the mid-1940s to distribute DDT to every household in the small towns of the countryside. Entire regions of the central plains that had been devastated by malaria were soon restored. For many years thereafter, DDT was considered a true miracle.

Carlos Ball
Boca Raton, Florida

During the last six months of 1944 and all of 1945, I was continually exposed to DDT on Guam by evening "hissing DDT black bombs" and by low-flying aircraft spraying DDT. Now at 73 I find myself quite normal, physically and mentally, and considering the health of my "issue," my eggs must have had normal shell thickness.

Emmett R. Schmitz
Lakewood, Colorado

Your issue on science (September/October) was a remarkable accomplishment in an age when the claims of science are thought to supersede all else. I am not quite ready to stop reading *Scientific American, Crisis,* and *The Thomist*, but at least now I know a quick way to get the benefits of all three if I'm in a hurry.

James O'Gara
Washington, D.C.

In "Science for the Smart, English for the Dumb?" (September/October) Eli Lehrer expresses concern that the "skill-based" curriculum found in high school humanities classes is less demanding than the "knowledge-based" curriculum required in math and science courses. I suspect the educrats are even now fixing the problem—by dumbing down math and science to a "skill-based" curriculum devoid of actual knowledge content.

In Nevada, the Washoe County School District's math curriculum is so heavily dependent upon the "skill-based" routines of calculators, starting in grade school, that many students are seriously shortchanged. My daughter's high school principal told me not to worry: Having higher-order math knowledge is no longer essential (this being the "information-accessing age").

In addition, the new science standards of Nevada are also more "skill-focused" and lean heavily toward "child-centered" education techniques emphasizing "self-discovery" (as opposed to actual *knowledge* discovery). The scientific method has been replaced with a requirement that each child invent his own method.

I suspect these examples are not unique to Nevada. The educrats are equalizing the rigor of the humanities and the math-science curricula—just not in the right direction.

Richard W. Hawkins
Lake Havasu City, Arizona

I recently came upon the November/December 1997 issue of TAE in which Karl Zinsmeister wrote, "My own prescription for federal encouragement of the sublime in America is a time-tested one: Just get out of the way. Government must keep the peace, and establish some rules, but beyond that it should minimize the temptation to inject itself into our national business."

I suggest government must not only establish rules, it must follow them itself. The government today considers itself above the law. As a first step in curbing this attitude, let me suggest that bureaucrats committing felonies be personally liable in civil court for damages.

Many IRS abuses seem to fit under the category of a federal felony. Would they have happened if the agents themselves were personally liable? Would the multiple violations of the Privacy Act occurring under the present administration have happened if those involved could face hundreds of irate plaintiffs?

Carlie J. Coats, Jr.
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Michael Barone's article on Grand Rapids was terrific ("A City Where Business and Philanthropy Flourish," September/October). In two pages, he told the story of a super community and why it is so good.

I was fortunate to grow up in this environment and was blessed to have the opportunity to represent the voters for 25 and a half years.

Congratulations to *The American Enterprise.*

President Gerald R. Ford
Beaver Creek, Colorado

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"Stop, Bob! Oh, gosh...I HATE what that consumer watchdog group's done to you."

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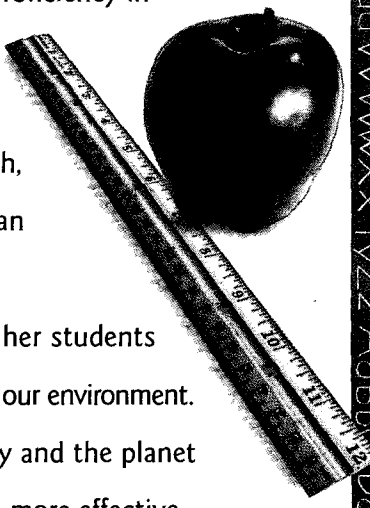
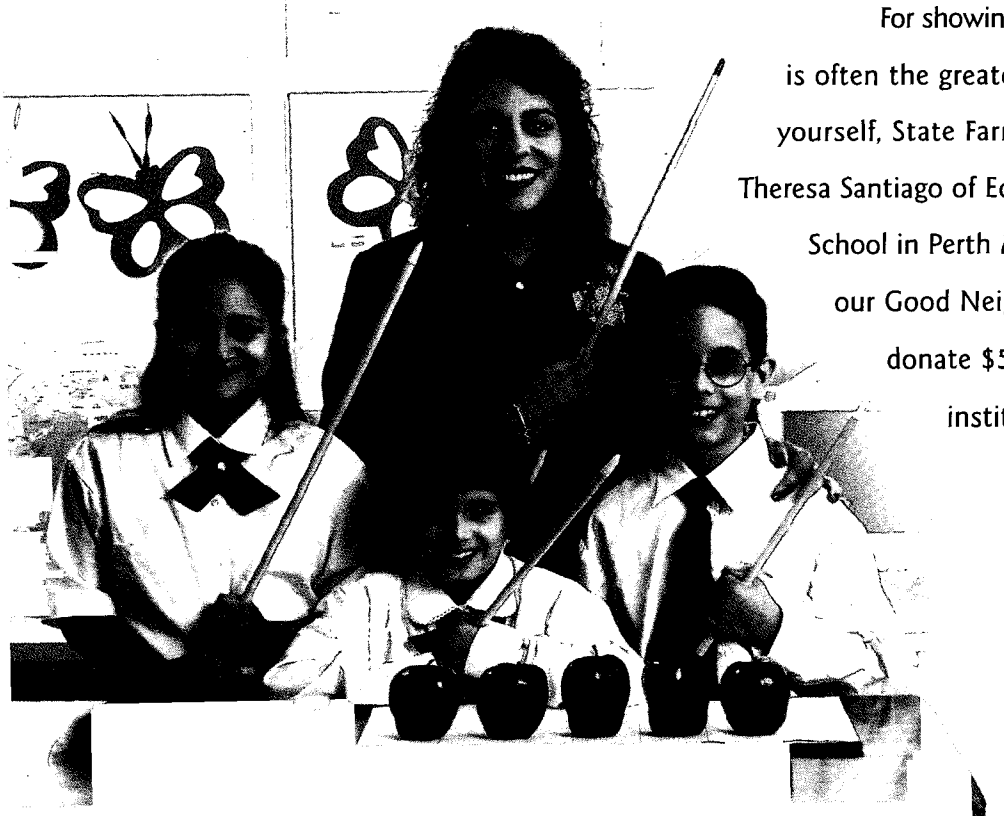
Actually, Ms. Santiago's students are some of Patten Elementary's most popular teachers.

Learning is never an easy task. Especially for students faced with physical and emotional challenges, as well as limited proficiency in English. But, it's with children like these that Theresa Santiago truly shines. Using her students' natural interest in the environment, Ms. Santiago designed a program of lesson plans that combined math, science, language arts and other elements of the curriculum into an ecological theme.



Through the use of puppetry, and other hands-on projects, her students learned to "teach" their families and students in other classes about our environment. And how they could all help take care of the school, their community and the planet we all share. As a result, these special-needs students have become more effective pupils, as well as budding leaders within their community.



For showing them that teaching others is often the greatest way to learn about yourself, State Farm is proud to present Theresa Santiago of Edward J. Patten Elementary School in Perth Amboy, New Jersey with our Good Neighbor Award, and to donate $5,000 to the educational institution of her choice.

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